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See page 329.

SCRIPTURE BIOGRAPHY
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PRACTICAL REMARKS.

JOHN AND PAUL,
INCLUDING
PETER AND THE TIMES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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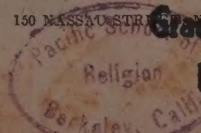
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CONTENTS.

LIFE OF JOHN THE APOSTLE.

CHAPTER I.

Introductory—Jews from Malachi to Matthew, . . . 7

CHAPTER II.

Early life of John, 26

CHAPTER III.

John a disciple of John the Baptist, 32

CHAPTER IV.

John with Jesus—Becomes one of the twelve, . . . 39

CHAPTER V.

John in the school of Christ—Witnesses the transfiguration
—The Samaritan villagers—His ambitious request, 47

CHAPTER VI.

John at the Mount of Olives—At the feast of the Pass-
over, 57

CHAPTER VII.

John at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, 64

CHAPTER VIII.

The resurrection of Jesus, 72

CHAPTER IX.

John at the Pentecost, 81

CHAPTER X.

John and the lame man—John in prison, 88

CHAPTER XI.

John at Samaria—Death of James his brother, 97

CHAPTER XII.

John at Ephesus—His writings and death, 104

LIFE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Childhood of Paul, 119

CHAPTER II.

Paul with Gamaliel, 136

CHAPTER III.

Paul a persecutor, 144

CHAPTER IV.

Paul's conversion, 152

CHAPTER V.

Paul at Antioch—Visits Jerusalem, 166

CHAPTER VI.

Paul's missionary tour with Barnabas, 173

CHAPTER VII.

Change of name—missionary tour continued, . . . 183

CHAPTER VIII.

A delegate to Jerusalem—Reproves Peter, . . . 199

CHAPTER IX.

Dissension of Paul and Barnabas—Tour with Silas, . 210

CHAPTER X.

Passes over to Europe—Imprisoned at Philippi, . . 220

CHAPTER XI.

Paul at Thessalonica and Berea, 231

CHAPTER XII.

Paul at Athens—Speech on Mars' hill, 239

CHAPTER XIII.

Paul at Corinth—Writes first and second Thessalonians, 248

CHAPTER XIV.

Paul's third missionary tour—Paul at Ephesus, . . 261

CHAPTER XV.

Writes the epistle to Galatians—First and second Corinthians—Plans journey to western Europe, 275

CHAPTER XVI.

Writes the epistle to the Romans—Collection for the church at Jerusalem, 290

CHAPTER XVII.

Paul at Troas—Miletus—Tyre—Cæsarea, 300

CHAPTER XVIII.

Paul arrested at Jerusalem—Before the Sanhedrim—Conspiracy,	310
-----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XIX.

Paul at Cæsarea—Before Felix,	327
-----------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XX.

Paul before Festus and Agrippa,	336
-------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXI.

Voyage to Rome—Shipwreck—Prisoner at Rome,	345
------------------------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XXII.

Writes Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, and Hebrews—Acquitted, and again imprisoned—Writes Titus, and II. Timothy—Death,	365
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Chronological table,	381
--------------------------------	-----

LIFE OF JOHN THE APOSTLE;

INCLUDING

THE TIMES OF THE OTHER APOSTLES,

AND

OF CHRIST.

WITH

AN OUTLINE OF JEWISH HISTORY BETWEEN THE
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY—JEWS FROM MALACHI TO
MATTHEW.

At the close of the Old Testament, about four hundred years before Christ, Palestine formed a part of the Persian domain. It continued subject to the Persians until their empire, as predicted by Daniel, 8 : 3-7, 20, 21, was overthrown by Alexander the Great, three hundred and thirty-one

years before the Christian era. The Jews occasionally suffered from Persian expeditions against Egypt, which, passing through Judea, involved the country in some of the evils of war. But with the exception of a short time during the reign of the usurper Smerdis, they were well treated by the Persian monarchs, who, for many years, made large contributions for defraying the expense of the sacrifices in the temple at Jerusalem.

When Alexander, in the progress of his conquests, was besieging Tyre, he sent an order to Jaddua the high-priest, as chief magistrate of the nation, requiring the Jews to furnish him some auxiliaries, supply his army with provisions, and pay to him the tribute they were accustomed to pay to the Persian kings. The high-priest returned answer that he had sworn not to bear arms against Darius, and that he would not violate his oath. Alexander, highly irritated at this reply, threatened that he would teach the high-priest, and through him all others, to whom they must keep their oaths. Tyre was taken, after a siege of seven months. Alexander spent two months more in subduing Gaza, and then hastened to Jerusalem. As he approached the city, according to Josephus, he was met by the high-priest, arrayed in his official robes, attended by the priests in their sacerdotal garments, and by the citizens clothed in

white. Alexander gave them a gracious reception, extended his hand to the high-priest, and went with him to the temple, where he offered sacrifices. When the priests, according to the Jewish historian, showed Alexander the prophecies of Daniel respecting him, he was highly gratified, freed the Jews from tribute on the sabbatical year, and gave them permission to live everywhere according to their own laws.

On the early death of Alexander, his generals seized on his empire and shared it among themselves. The most powerful and celebrated of the kingdoms thus established, were the Greek-Syrian and the Greek-Egyptian. Between these two rival monarchies the Jews were often crushed, as their ancestors had been by the contentions of the Assyrians and Egyptians before the captivity. "Their country was devastated, and to whichever side victory might incline, they were equally exposed to injury." For more than a century and a half, Judea was sometimes subject to Syria, and sometimes to Egypt. Though there were long intervals of repose, the evils they suffered from this unsettled state of things in their own country, and the tempting offers to settle in other lands, led many of the Jews to establish colonies out of Palestine. At Alexandria in Egypt, they enjoyed the same privileges as the most favored citizens ;

and large numbers of them settled at Antioch on the Orontes, the capital of the Syrian empire.

By their intimate connection with these Grecian monarchies, the Jews became acquainted with Greek literature and philosophy. Some, more lax in their sentiments and less attached to their religion than the rest of their countrymen, began to show a taste for the customs and religion of their conquerors. Doubtless, too, they hoped to gain favor at court, and enjoy office and honor as the reward of apostasy. They would allow that the religion and customs of their ancestors were well enough for early times, but urge that usages and sentiments should be modified to suit present circumstances. They would claim, as innovators ever do, to be more enlightened and liberal than their forefathers, or even than their own contemporaries. In every community there are persons of loose morals, who dislike the restraints of religion, and are ready to welcome any change that promises them freedom to indulge their favorite vices. Men of this stamp would gather around those who aimed to introduce heathen customs into Judea, and cheer them on in the work of overthrowing the institutions of a better age.

In the year 175 before Christ, Jason, a brother of the high-priest Onias III., promised the Syrian king ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES, to whom the Jews were

then subject, a very large sum for permission to establish a Greek gymnasium at Jerusalem. Antiochus readily granted his request, for he saw that such a measure would tend to undermine the national character, and gradually change the Jewish religion into heathenism. "The gymnasium was so much frequented, that even the priests neglected the services of the temple to engage in athletic exercises," and this, though the "games were generally celebrated in honor of some heathen god." In later days, the Herodian princes built theatres and amphitheatres in Jerusalem, and other cities of Palestine. Games were exhibited after the Roman manner, in which the actors were naked, and men fought with wild beasts, and wild beasts with each other.

Jason, the author of this innovation, was made high-priest; but after three years, his elder brother Onias IV. was put in his place by Antiochus Epiphanes. Onias IV. assumed the Greek name Menelaus, abjured Judaism, and with his adherents became obligated to bring the whole nation to adopt the Greek religion.

While Antiochus, a year or two afterwards, was making war in Egypt, a report of his death was spread abroad in Palestine. This led to some disturbances among the Jews. It was told the king that "all the Jews were in rebellion, rejoicing at

his death." Returning hastily, he took Jerusalem by storm, plundered the city, slew eighty thousand persons of both sexes and all ages, and sold a multitude of the inhabitants into slavery. Under the guidance of the high-priest Menelaus, he went into the sanctuary uttering blasphemous language, and stripped the temple of its most precious vessels, with all the gold and silver he could find in it. "He then sacrificed swine upon the altar, boiled a piece of the flesh, and sprinkled the whole temple with the broth."

In the year 167 before Christ, Antiochus sent Appollonius, his chief collector of tribute, with an army of twenty thousand men, to ravage Jerusalem. The first Sabbath after he came to the city, Appollonius sent out his soldiers to kill all the men he met, and to make slaves of all the women and children. Jerusalem was filled with the dead, the houses were plundered, and the walls of the city thrown down. From the ruins of the houses which he demolished, Appollonius built a citadel on mount Zion, that overlooked the temple mount. The Jews could not visit the temple with safety to perform the public services of their religion, and the daily sacrifice ceased in the month of June, 167 years before Christ. The inhabitants fled from the city, and Jerusalem "was made a habitation of strangers, and became strange to those

that were born in her." "Her feasts were turned into mourning, her Sabbaths into reproach, her honor into contempt."

Antiochus issued an order that all the nations under his sway should constitute one people, and worship only his gods. He forbade the Jews to offer burnt-offerings and sacrifices and drink-offerings in the temple, and commanded them to profane the Sabbath and festival days. He charged them to "set up altars and groves and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts," and to "leave their children uncircumcised." The temple itself was dedicated to Jupiter Olympius, to whom sacrifices were offered, and whose statue seems to have been erected within the sacred precincts. Thus was set up in the holy place "the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet." All the copies of the law which could be laid hold of were burnt, and those in whose possession they were found were put to death.

The Jews had never before suffered so severe a persecution as this. But many were so firmly established in their regard for the law, and in hatred of idolatry, that they preferred death by the most painful tortures to profaning the holy covenant. An aged priest named Mattathias was commanded to sacrifice in the mode prescribed by the decree of Antiochus, with the offer of being

numbered among the king's friends. He not only refused, but slew the king's officer. He then called on all who were zealous for the law to follow him ; and with his seven sons, their wives and children and cattle, fled into the wilderness. Many gathered around his standard, and a firm resistance was made to the king's mandate. Mattathias went through the cities of Judea casting down the idolatrous altars, circumcising the children, and slaying the king's officers, and his own apostate countrymen. At first, these pious Jews considered it unlawful to take arms on the Sabbath. A thousand of them, who were concealed in a cave not far from Jerusalem, were massacred by their enemies on that day, without offering the least resistance. After this, they resolved to fight in self-defence, but not to commence an attack on the Sabbath.

In the year 166 before Christ, Mattathias, being near death, appointed for the military leader of his party, his third son Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, who was already distinguished for valor. Appolonius, governor of Samaria, attacking the forces of Judas, was defeated, and himself slain in battle. Soon after this, Judas vanquished Seron, general of the Syrians. He thus accustomed his men to war, and armed them from the spoils of the enemy. Full of wrath when he heard of the successes of

the Jews, Antiochus determined to destroy Jerusalem, and exterminate the whole nation. While he went himself into Persia to recruit his exhausted treasures, his general Lysias, whom he had made regent of the countries west of the Euphrates, sent into Judea an army of forty thousand foot and seven thousand cavalry. To this powerful army was added a multitude of Syrians, Philistines, and apostate Jews. The army was attended by more than a thousand merchants, who, in accordance with the custom of those times, came with their servants and money to purchase the captive Jews for slaves. Judas, with a small company of men, rushed on the enemy in the night, and defeated them with great slaughter. Many of the slave-dealers were taken prisoners, and an immense booty was the reward of victory.

The next year, Lysias invaded Judea with a still larger army; but was put to flight, with the loss of five thousand men. Judas then hastened to Jerusalem to purify the temple and restore it to its former glory. "The sacrifices were recommenced on the twenty-fifth of December, the same day on which, three years before, the temple had been dedicated to Jupiter Olympius, and after three years and a half had elapsed since the city was laid waste in June, 167 years before Christ."

The castle on mount Zion was still in the pos-

session of the enemy, and the apostate Jews, who had taken refuge there, often sallied out and interrupted the public solemnities. Judas built a high and strong wall around the temple, and left a garrison to protect the worshippers against attack from the castle.

When Antiochus Epiphanes heard of the defeat of his forces, he was at Elymais in Persia, where he was detained by an insurrection of the people, caused by his robbing the celebrated temple in that city. In a great rage, and more firmly resolved than ever to exterminate the Jews, he set out on his return, but was seized on his journey by a painful disease. Stung with remorse for his sacrilege and other enormities, he died on the frontiers of Persia and Babylon, in the year 163 before Christ, having reigned eleven years. Thus perished this bitter enemy and severe scourge of the Jews, whose character and deeds were described by Daniel, three centuries and a half before, so minutely and graphically as to seem more like history than prediction.

Judas Maccabeus, after many other heroic achievements, was slain in an engagement with a vastly superior force of the enemy. His brother Jonathan succeeded to the chief command, of which he showed himself eminently worthy. After he had been slain by treachery, his brother Simon

was leader of the Jews. In the year 143 before Christ, they became once more a free and independent people. Grateful for the distinguished benefits conferred on them by the house of Mattathias, they made both the high-priesthood and the office of regent or prince of the Jews, hereditary in his family.

THE ROMAN POWER, which at the close of the Old Testament, was scarcely known in the East, now began to exercise a controlling influence in the affairs of Western Asia. Simon, on his accession to the high-priesthood and the command of the army, sent an embassy to renew with the Romans an alliance previously formed with that nation. The terms of the treaty were engraved on tables of copper. The friendship of the Romans, however, did not avail at this time to protect the Jews against attack from the Syrians; but by the energetic measures of Simon and his sons, they were soon expelled from the country. After ruling Judea eighteen years, Simon was treacherously murdered by his son-in-law Ptolemy governor of Jericho. He was succeeded by his son, the celebrated John Hyrcanus, who possessed the supreme authority more than thirty years, during which, for the most part, the Jews enjoyed prosperity. Aristobulus his son soon after coming into power,

assumed the title of king. This dignity was enjoyed by his descendants till the year 34 before Christ, when Antigonus, the last of the Asmonean family, was conquered by Herod and the Romans. He was carried prisoner to Antioch, where, at the order of Mark Antony, "he was executed by the axe of the licitor like a common malefactor." Herod the Great, who, three years before, had been consecrated king with idolatrous sacrifices at Rome, now ascended the throne of Judea.

In the year 63 before Christ, the Roman general Pompey took Jerusalem. Attended by the chief officers of his army, he went into the temple and viewed the holy of holies, but left the sacred vessels and treasures untouched. Twelve years after, the temple was pillaged by the Romans under Crassus, who robbed it of "the two thousand talents which Pompey had left, and took eight thousand talents besides."

The Jews were now freed from the exactions and oppressions of their old enemies the Greek-Syrian and the Greek-Egyptian monarchies; the former of which had been reduced to a Roman province about 65, and the latter about 30 years before the Christian era. But Judea was not entirely free from masters; for though ruled by its own kings, the Roman power was predominant in the country.

Herod the Great was an Idumean. Through the influence of his father Antipater, who was a favorite of the Romans, Herod obtained the chief command in Galilee when only fifteen years old. He distinguished himself in subduing the robbers who infested that country, and his fame was extended through the surrounding regions. Herod took the part of the conspirators who assassinated Julius Cæsar, but was afterwards friendly to Mark Antony. When the fortunes of the latter became desperate, Herod attached himself to his rival Octavianus, afterwards called Augustus, who confirmed him as king of Judea, and treated him with marked favor. Herod was tyrannical and cruel, not shrinking from the most atrocious deeds to gratify his jealousy or confirm his power. He put to death his wife Mariamne, of the royal Asmonean family, and two of his own sons he sacrificed to a suspicion that they were plotting against his life. He built many cities, and adorned Jerusalem with magnificent edifices, which restored much of its former splendor. Having, in the year 16 before Christ, formed a design to rebuild the temple, he spent two years in collecting materials. "The main body of the edifice was completed in nine years and a half; but the whole was not finished till long after the death of Herod." He died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign, about two years

after the birth of our Saviour, whom he as foolishly as impiously endeavored to destroy.

The kingdom of Herod the Great was divided among several of his children. Archelaus obtained Idumea, Judea, and Samaria; Herod Antipas, Galilee and Perea, as the original territory of the tribes east of the Jordan was now called; and Philip the northern part of Perea, and the country east of the Jordan to the region of Damascus on the north. The territory of Archelaus yielded a yearly revenue of six hundred talents, that of Antipas about two hundred, and that of Philip one hundred. Augustus did not permit Archelaus to assume the title of king, but he was called ethnarch.

At this period, almost all Palestine was in commotion. During the absence of Archelaus in Italy, the people rose in open revolt against the Roman power. The country was full of bands of robbers, each having a king at their head, and the people were probably expecting the Messiah to deliver them from a foreign yoke. Archelaus was barbarous and tyrannical in his government. In the tenth year of his reign, he was accused before Augustus by the principal men of Judea and Samaria, and banished to Vienne in Gaul. This was about the time of the first visit Jesus made to Jerusalem, when he disputed with the doctors in the temple. Augustus now reduced the country to the form of

a Roman province, governed by Roman procurators. Their business was, to exact tribute, administer justice, and repress seditions. The procurators of Judea were dependent on the proconsul, governor or president of Syria. The power of life and death was taken from the Sanhedrim, the supreme judicial council of the nation, but the Jews were left to the enjoyment of their own religion.

At the advent of our Saviour, there were among the Jews of Palestine three principal religious or philosophical sects—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. At what time these sects originated, history does not inform us, but the elements for such a division existed, perhaps, during the captivity in Babylon. The Pharisees and Sadducees were not only religious sects, but political parties striving for superiority in the supreme council of the nation.

The *Pharisees* boasted of their attachment to the law, though by asserting the binding force of traditions, they sometimes subverted its precepts. They were superstitiously strict in observing the forms of religion, and regarded themselves as more righteous than others. They were zealous in making proselytes to their party. While excessively scrupulous in things of small consequence, they were lax in moral duties, exalting ceremonial rites

above justice and charity. They were held in high repute as expositors of the laws, both civil and religious. In the time of our Saviour they were the predominant sect among the Jews, who, their national independence being lost, could find a centre of unity only in their religion. As stanch, ostentatious defenders of this, the Pharisees commanded the reverence of vast numbers among the people. For the sake of popularity, many of them substituted the appearance of holiness for the reality. The reputation of sanctity was too productive of worldly good to be lightly relinquished. Hence, they defended their system with the bitterness and recklessness of selfish men contending for office and honor. Such a sect could ill brook the denunciations of Jesus against their covetousness and hypocrisy, or endure his teachings, which discarded the authority of traditions, and vindicated the spirituality of the Mosaic law.

The *Sadducees* rejected all traditions, and clung to the text of the sacred books; but they held that God was the only immaterial being—affirming that there was no created angel or spirit, and no rewards or punishments, or even life in a future state. They were less numerous than the Pharisees; the sect consisting chiefly of men distinguished for wealth or station, who wished to indulge in sensual pleasure without the restraints of

a future account. The common people among the Jews never had much sympathy with this sect, though from their superior minds or eminent position some of the Sadducees found a place in the Sanhedrim. While converts to Christianity were found among the Pharisees, we do not hear that any of the Sadducees were persuaded that Jesus is the true Messiah. It is probable that the principles of this sect were more readily introduced among the Jews, in consequence of their subjection to different heathen kingdoms.

The *Essenes* lived in brotherhoods, somewhat after the manner of monks in later days. They never offered oblations at the temple, though they sometimes sent presents thither. Dwelling in lonely places and seldom appearing in public assemblies, they are not explicitly mentioned in the New Testament. They were not a numerous sect. In Palestine they resided principally on the western shore of the Dead sea.

In the year 149 before Christ, Onias, a son of the Jewish high-priest Onias III., obtained permission of Ptolemy Philometor, to build a temple at Leontopolis in Egypt, for the numerous body of Jews who dwelt in that country. It was soon completed after the model of the temple at Jerusalem, Onias was made high-priest, and the common

priests were procured from the descendants of Aaron. The whole order of worship was the same as at Jerusalem. This temple stood till some years after the death of Christ, and was finally demolished by the Roman emperor Vespasian, in consequence of the rebellion of the Jews.

When Herod the Great, in the latter part of his reign, to immortalize his own name and gratify the Jews, proposed to erect on the site of the temple an edifice more spacious and magnificent, they suspected him of a design to undermine their national religion, and change their mode of worship. To remove their apprehensions, he promised to take down the old temple no faster than was necessary for building the new. In accommodation to the feelings and prejudices of the Jews, divine wisdom in like manner removed the ancient dispensation of Moses, substituting in its place by a gradual process the more ample and permanent structure of Christianity. In distant ages, prophets had spoken of another form of religion which should embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and by the richness of its blessings cause the former things to be forgotten. Providences, too, had spoken—now in the transportation of the Jews to Assyria and Babylon—now in their subjection to foreign dominion in their own country—and now in their colonization among almost every civilized nation on earth, thus

acquainting the heathen with a purer religion than their own, and making Judaism itself a harbinger of Christianity.

In due time, THE DIVINE WORD, JESUS, the long predicted Messiah—"he that was to come"—appeared in the world in the form of human flesh, breaking down "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile, and reconciling both unto God. Entering on his public ministry at the age of thirty years, he selected twelve of his followers to constitute his family, and attend him wherever he went in fulfilling the duties of his office.

Among the number thus highly distinguished by their Master, was one so well known in the little circle as "*the disciple whom Jesus loved,*" that the subject of the preference might himself speak openly of it without offence. Such a character must be worthy of contemplation, and we will now attempt to sketch its outline.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY LIFE OF JOHN.

HISTORY does not mention the birthplace of John, but it was probably Bethsaida, a small town near Capernaum, on the north-west coast of the sea of Galilee. This was the birthplace of Peter and Andrew, the partners of John, and it is here we find him engaged in the occupation of a fisherman. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome. They had another son, called James, who was probably older than John, for when they are both mentioned in connection, the precedence is given to James.

It was the privilege of John to be trained in a pious family, "and he was probably inclined at an early period to seek after divine things." His mother Salome was one of the company of women who attended Jesus from Galilee, and ministered to his wants. Like Simeon and other devout persons among the Jews, she was evidently "waiting for the consolation of Israel." At this period there was a general expectation among the Jews of the speedy appearance of the Messiah, who would introduce a golden age among the nations. Many of the people supposed he would be a temporal prince.

They more readily entertained such a view of the prophecies concerning him, from their restlessness under the Roman yoke. Patriotism, pride, the exactions they were suffering from their conquerors, all united to strengthen their belief. And even those pious individuals who regarded him in the higher character of one who would "pour out his soul unto death, and bear the sin of many," anticipated special temporal benefits to the Jews from his reign. If he was to purify their religion, they supposed it would still be Judaism; and as their prophets had foretold that the law would go forth from Zion, they thought Jerusalem would be the head of empire, as well as the centre of moral influence.

Such sentiments Salome undoubtedly instilled into the susceptible mind of her son in his childhood. The glories of the Messiah's reign, of which at a later day she sought so distinguished a share for her children, would be the frequent theme of their domestic discourse. Every fresh act of Roman oppression related in the family would call forth a prayer for the speedy coming of their deliverer. Every tale of violence committed by robber-bands, which then infested the country, would awaken longings for the dawn of that day when the wolf should dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid.

The early life of John was probably spent in the middle condition between poverty and riches, which is so favorable for the formation of virtuous habits, and in which so many men eminent for talents, piety, and usefulness have been reared. His father Zebedee appears to have been in comfortable worldly circumstances ; he had "hired servants" in his employment.

The daily occupation of John from his youth was well suited to prepare him for the service of Jesus. It would accustom him to hardships. It would teach him calmly and fearlessly to face dangers. It would cultivate patience and self-denial. It would make him acquainted with the temptations and sufferings, the sentiments and prejudices of laboring men, and the best mode of access to their hearts. At the same time it afforded opportunity for meditation on the things of another life, even when he was engaged in the duties of his calling. It kept before his view the works of God in one of the loveliest regions of Palestine. While with his partners he plied his craft at night amid the loneliness of the waters, the glories of an oriental sky were suited to allure him to hold converse with heaven. With the opening dawn, the mountains, rising some of them a thousand feet from the water's edge and nearly inclosing the lake, would begin to appear through the shadows, not "stern

and awful," like those which hem in the Dead sea, but at once attracting the eye by their beauty, and elevating the soul by their grandeur. The waters, glittering in the beams of the morning sun, "like molten silver," would speak of the divine glory, and summon the fishermen, returning with the reward of their nightly toils, to render thanksgiving to their kind Preserver. The tempest, too, sweeping down from the narrow defiles, as on the memorable night when the presence of Jesus kept them from sinking in the deep, would often give them occasion in their extremity to cry out, "Lord, save us ; we perish."

Rifled of its beauty and comparatively desolate, the region where John passed his boyhood still kindles the admiration of the traveller. Viewing it from the heights west of the lake, Dr. Olin says, "We were upon the brow of what must appear to a spectator at its base a lofty mountain, which bounds the deep basin of the sea of Galilee. The sun had just set behind us in a blaze of red light, which filled the western sky for many degrees above the horizon, and was slightly reflected from the smooth glassy surface of the beautiful lake, whose opposite shore was visible for many miles on the right and left, rising abruptly out of the water into an immense and continuous bulwark, several hundred feet in height, grand and massive,

but softened by graceful undulations, and covered with a luxuriant carpet of vegetation. Beyond the lake stretched out a vast, and to our eyes a boundless region, filled up with a countless number of beautiful rounded hills, all clad in verdure, which, at this moment, was invested with a peculiar richness of coloring. In the remote distance, though full in our view"—a little east of north—"the snowy top of mount Hermon was still glittering and basking in the beams of the sun, while a chaste, cool drapery of white, fleecy clouds hung around its base. The green, graceful form of mount Tabor rose behind us"—in the southwest—"while over the broad and well cultivated plain"—between Tabor and the sea of Galilee—"the numerous fields of wheat, now of a dark, luxuriant green, contrasted very strongly and strangely with intervening tracts of red, freshly ploughed ground. Independent of sacred associations, this was altogether a scene of rare and unique beauty—nay, of splendid magnificence."

Such beauty and grandeur, beheld from day to day, could not but leave deep impressions on the meditative, earnest nature of John, and without a stretch of fancy, one might easily trace resemblances between the scenery and the peculiar traits of his character.

From the easy circumstances of his father, we

may infer that John enjoyed some opportunity for instruction. The Jewish council, indeed, regarded him as "unlearned and ignorant;" but this was probably because he was not trained in the rabbinical studies of the law. The Pharisees counted all as "uneducated," who were not "rabbinical scholars." At any rate, if John was cut off, by his situation in early life, or by the want of books in his day, from the means of other knowledge, he probably had access to the Old Testament, and was taught by his pious mother to understand and practise its precepts. If he had not the abounding advantages of modern times for literary improvement, neither was he exposed to be led astray by light, seductive publications, such as misspend the time, weaken the intellect, and ruin the souls of so many youth at the present day. For a thoughtful young Hebrew the Bible would have peculiar charms. It was the book of his nation, the book of a covenant and promises pertaining specially to his own countrymen. Its history was the history of his ancestors, the scenes of its incidents were in his own land, and often in his own neighborhood; its miracles were wrought for the defence or delivery of his own country; and his, in a peculiar sense, was the God whose character and glory it reveals.

CHAPTER III.

JOHN A DISCIPLE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

WHEN John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elias," proclaiming the near approach of the kingdom of heaven, the people flocked from all quarters to hear his message and enroll themselves among his disciples. Not alarm of conscience only, and high-wrought anxiety to obtain eternal life, impelled the multitude to the banks of the Jordan. Political feeling swelled the tide of religious zeal. In the hope of relief from hated foreign sway, the Pharisee forgot his self-righteousness, and the Sadducee his scepticism, and side by side listened patiently to the burning reproofs of the rough-clad, rough-spoken herald of Christ.

Prompted by his own earnest feelings, and doubtless urged on by his godly mother, we soon find the young fisherman of Galilee, with his partners Andrew and Peter, in the train of the reformer. Before taking this step, we may well suppose they had, while toiling on the waters, spent many an hour in conversation respecting the character and work of the Baptist. In a matter of so much interest, they would seek direction from above.

Salome, too, would often implore a blessing on her absent son while he listened to the messenger of heaven. The impressive discourses of the Baptist would sink deep into the susceptible mind of the young Galilean, and in his case the "baptism of repentance" was not an empty ceremony. The heart responded to the confession of the lips; and the kingdom of God, the reign of heaven, was already begun in his soul.

At length, while throughout Palestine "men mused in their hearts" whether the Baptist "were Christ or not," Luke 3:15, Jesus came from Nazareth "to be baptized of him" John seemed unwilling to perform the office. He had, doubtless, been informed of the miraculous events connected with the early history of Jesus as well as his own, and may have known him personally, but this is uncertain. They lived at a distance from each other; the parents of the Baptist, who were aged at his birth, probably died when he was young, so that intercourse early ceased between the family of Zechariah and Zebedee; and the Baptist had spent some years in the seclusion of the wilderness. One might suppose the kinsmen would sometimes meet at the feast in Jerusalem, for it is scarcely credible that Jesus never went up to the temple between his twelfth and thirtieth year. The austere habits of the Baptist may, however,

have kept him from mixing in these festive scenes. His faith in the Messiahship of Jesus was confirmed when he saw the Spirit descending "like a dove," and resting upon him. Perhaps the son of Zebedee was present on this occasion, for he was a disciple of the Baptist but a short time afterwards. If he heard the humble remark of his master, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" it would perplex him; but it would prepare his mind for the still clearer communication about to be made respecting the Messiah.

After the temptation for forty days which "immediately" followed his baptism, Jesus returned to the region "where John was baptizing." The Sanhedrim, who had the superintendence in matters of religion and law among the Jews, sent a deputation from Jerusalem about this time to investigate the claims of John to be a public teacher and administer baptism. This would be an anxious moment to his followers. Their doubts respecting his official character would now be solved. When, in reply to the inquiry of the commission, "Who art thou?" he "confessed, I am not the Christ," many would be filled with sadness. The hope they had begun to cherish that he was the Messiah was dissipated. The assurance of the Baptist that One whom they knew not, far superior to himself, was among them, was too indefinite and

too slightly apprehended to cheer their sinking spirits.

But light was soon to dawn on their darkness. "The next day, John seeth Jesus coming to him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" adding his emphatic affirmation, "This is the Son of God." Such a declaration, passing from mouth to mouth through the crowds, would awaken deep feeling in the mind of the young son of Zebedee, and he could scarcely fail to seek from his teacher further instruction on this engrossing subject. If, with many of his countrymen, he had begun to hope the Baptist was the promised Messiah, he could not without pain transfer the veneration he felt for his old master to a stranger. But he was in search of truth, and was as ready to sacrifice for it prejudice and affection, as the Baptist was to dim his own fame in the growing brightness of the light from heaven. The first desire of his heart would now be to form an acquaintance with Jesus. An opportunity for this was not long wanting.

"The next day after," as the Baptist was standing with Andrew and John,* he saw Jesus pass-

* The most approved commentators regard John as the *unnamed* disciple who was with Andrew. "The evangelist modestly refrains from making his personal relations conspicuous," and never once in his gospel refers to himself

ing by, and with a look of reverence and love again exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God." The sight, the word, fixed the resolution of the two disciples, and they immediately "followed Jesus." Oppressed with awe, the young men approached the Messiah. It was he "of whom Moses and the prophets did write," whose name and anticipated triumphs had fired their mind in childhood; who was not only the Hope of Israel, but "the Desire of all nations." Jesus "saw them following," he knew what was in their hearts, but to relieve their timidity he said, "What seek ye?" Encouraged by his kind manner, they intimated their wish to see and speak with him. "Rabbi, Master, where dwellest thou?" Too modest to obtrude themselves at once as his companions, they are desirous of coming to him at a subsequent period. Jesus, full of love, takes them immediately along with him. And still, from his throne in the heavens, issues the same kind invitation to the poorest and humblest, the most timid and shrinking, who long for his friendship, "Come and see." There need be no delay, no tarrying till to-morrow; come to-day. "Come and see." The young men went

by name. He must have known who the "two disciples" were, and if one of them was not himself, we can imagine no reason why he should specify only the name of Andrew.

with Jesus and spent several hours in his society. At evening, they returned to the Baptist.

Many years after, in his old age, the evangelist recorded in his gospel his first meeting with the Saviour. The scene, with its minutest incidents, was too deeply impressed on his heart, too closely bound up with the choicest hopes, to be forgotten. The gentle, winning words by which Jesus attracted the eager inquirers to himself, were still living in the recollection of the venerable apostle, though he has recorded few of them in his brief narrative of our Saviour's life. He doubtless reported them to the Baptist; and when he returned to Bethsaida, they would be repeated and listened to with breathless attention in the household circle.

The young men could not confine their belief in their own bosoms. At once they hastened to communicate the joyful news to Peter, who had accompanied them from Galilee, but for some reason was not with them on this occasion. Andrew first met his brother, and with the exulting salutation, "We have found the Messias," he brought him to Jesus.

John was not called at once to preach the gospel, or even to be a member of the family of Jesus. More than a year probably passed, after his first interview with the Messiah, before he was summoned to the apostleship.

John and Andrew appear to have been next to the Baptist in avowing faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ. Here, then, are the "first beginnings of the Christian church." If the river had always been as pure as the fountain, how changed would have been the history of Christianity and its influence on the world !

It is the privilege, and it should be the purpose of every one who has found peace through the blood of Jesus, to say to others, "Behold the Lamb of God !" It does not require great talents, or a profound knowledge of theology, to direct your friend or your neighbor to the cross of Christ for salvation. To do this, you need not be a minister ; you need not wait to be older or wiser. It is the work of a child as well as of a man. If your daily life shows that you love the Saviour, that you are growing into his image, the invitation, though breathed from lisping lips, will be a word of power.

CHAPTER IV.

JOHN WITH JESUS—BECOMES ONE OF THE
TWELVE.

A FEW days after this interview, Jesus went into Galilee, and with his disciples attended a marriage at Cana, about seven miles north of Nazareth. At this time none appear to have acknowledged him as Messiah and become his followers, except the three young men just mentioned, with Philip and Nathanael. The last resided at Cana, John 21 : 12 ; but whether Jesus first met him there, or on his way to Galilee, the narrative does not mention. It is probable, therefore, that John and the others continued a while in the company of Jesus before returning to their usual occupations. The account of the occurrences at the wedding seems to have been given by an eye-witness.

After a short residence at Capernaum, Jesus went to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover, where he drove the money-changers from the temple. Some of the Galileans were at this feast, John 4 : 15, and it is not probable that John, in his state of mind, would neglect such a festival. He seems to have been present at the interview between Jesus and Nicodemus. The visit of a Jew-

ish senator to Jesus at so early a stage in his ministry, would be an interesting event to the recent disciple. The time and manner of making the visit—the fear of detection struggling with a desire to know the truth—the startling and almost repulsive reply to the respectful address of the inquirer, fixed the scene indelibly in the mind of the evangelist, and he never mentions Nicodemus without the reminiscence of his coming “to Jesus by night.”

After spending several months in the rural parts of Judea, Jesus returned to Galilee, passing through the province of Samaria. John was probably among the disciples who attended him on this journey. John 4 : 8.

After a short stay at Nazareth, Jesus went down to Capernaum, “and dwelt there.” “As his custom was,” he would preach in the synagogue “on the Sabbath-days.” Doubtless John was a frequent attendant on the instructions of Jesus at this period in Capernaum. His partner Peter was now married and living in that city. As the young men listened with deep interest to his teachings, Jesus could not fail to observe the loveliness beaming from the countenance of the one—the decision and activity which marked the look and manner of the other.

The repeated public addresses of Jesus had

awakened attention among the people of Capernaum. One day, as he was standing by the lake, they gathered around him in great numbers, pressing forward "to hear the word of God." Two fishing vessels were drawn up on the shore, the owners of which were near by, washing their nets. Going on board one of these boats which belonged to Simon, whom Jesus sometime before had surnamed Peter, he besought him to "thrust out a little from the land." Simon would hasten to perform a task so grateful to his feelings. Jesus sat down and "taught the people out of the ship." Not only Peter, but James and John, with their father Zebedee and many other fishermen of that neighborhood, we may be sure, were among the crowd. What was the subject of his discourse the narrative does not state; but as he was about to summon several of his hearers to forsake all and follow him, we may suppose his teaching was designed to prepare them for such a decision. At the close of his discourse, "he said to Simon, Launch out now into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." The fishermen had spent the previous night on the lake in profitless toil, and were doubtless weary; but at the command of Jesus they cast the net into the waters. So many fish were inclosed, that they were obliged to ask the aid of their partners James and John in bringing the net

to the shore. They were astonished at the miracle. The hope they began to indulge, many months before, on the banks of the Jordan, that they had found the Messiah, was now ripened into certainty ; and when Jesus said, " Follow me," without a moment's hesitation they obeyed the command.

Zebedee returned home from his daily toils, we may well believe, not dispirited and saddened, and ready to complain that his sons were lured away on a visionary enterprise, but grateful that they were counted worthy to be the companions of Jesus. The heart of Salome would leap for joy at the high honor conferred on her offspring ; and the evening devotions of the household would call forth songs of praise that the absent were not wanderers from the way of peace, but safely gathered around the good shepherd.

How thankful ought parents to be who have children fitted by natural gifts, education, and piety, to become heralds of the gospel to the destitute ! And when their children are summoned to this work by Providence, how cheerfully should they surrender them to this honorable service !

Until this time, these young Galileans, though occasionally found in the train of Jesus, appear to have been employed during the intervals in their usual occupation. When they went out that morning to prepare for their customary toils on

the deep, they little dreamed of the change about to take place in their course of life ; that they were to be transferred to the special service of Jesus, and henceforth to fish for men in the wide sea of the world. Others almost in a moment have passed from obscurity to the highest stations of empire : who but the apostles were one hour undistinguished laborers, and the next elected to thrones, with names inwrought into the very foundations of "the new Jerusalem?"* Rev. 21 : 14.

If the prompt decision of these young men to obey the call of Jesus had been the result of sudden impulse, of sympathy, or the mere striking exhibition of some novel or sublime truth, it might soon have become enfeebled, and at length been succeeded by open apostasy. They might in a few days have deserted Jesus and returned to their old manner of living. The command to leave all and follow the Saviour was doubtless attended by special influences of the Spirit on their hearts ; but the way for their determination had been gradually preparing from the time of their first interview with Jesus. They would ponder the solemn words of John the Baptist : "Behold the Lamb of God,

* When Alexander the Great offered the spoils of his eastern campaign, if he might inscribe his name on the temple of Diana, the Ephesians declined the offer.

which taketh away the sin of the world !” Though they might not yet apprehend their full meaning, they knew enough to stir the deepest fountains in the heart. Doubtless, too, they frequently conversed with their companions and men of their own craft on the character and claims of Jesus. The simplicity of their education and their humble rank saved them from cavils which troubled the scribes and Pharisees. They would more readily listen to the teachings of Jesus than if trained in the schools and familiar with the traditions and glosses which in that age obscured and disfigured the word of God. The rulers at the metropolis might dispute whether Christ should come out of Galilee ; the Rabbis, from their preconceived opinions, might reject the evidence of miracles, and ascribe the work of God to evil spirits ; but these honest Galileans, undisturbed by theories, believed the evidence of their senses, and yielded to the cravings of their hearts for a Messiah who would “ save his people from their sins.” They followed Jesus because they felt it good to be with him. However indistinct, at this time, were their views of his character and the object of his coming into the world, they were “ sure ” that he had “ the words of eternal life.”

As Jesus was one day passing by “ the receipt of custom,” or “ toll-office ” at Capernaum, the tax-

gatherer was sitting there busied with his official duties. While such numbers in that city flocked to hear Jesus in the synagogue and at the seaside, Matthew, if a stranger to his person and teachings, could not have been a stranger to his fame and character. Whether the summons, "Follow me," was the first sound of the Saviour's voice which ever greeted his ears, we know not; but without a moment's hesitation he left his lucrative employment, rose up, and followed Jesus. Thus from this one neighborhood were gathered at least six of the twelve apostles of Christ—Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Matthew. Well was the saying of the ancient prophet fulfilled: "To them which sit in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up."

Not long after this, having spent a whole night on a lonely mountain in prayer, out of all his followers Jesus selected twelve to be teachers of his doctrines and witnesses of his resurrection. The six young men we have already noticed as specially called to be his followers, were included in the number. At what time or in what circumstances the other six became his adherents, the sacred narrative gives us no account; unless, as some suppose, Bartholomew was the same as Nathanael. John in his gospel makes no mention of this remarkable event in his life. It was sufficient-

ly known from the writings of the other evangelists and his own position in the church. But he could never forget his emotion when the name of John fell on his ear, as Jesus called one and another to ascend the mount and be consecrated apostles.

CHAPTER V.

JOHN IN THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST—WITNESSES
THE TRANSFIGURATION—THE SAMARITAN
VILLAGERS—HIS AMBITIOUS REQUEST.

AFTER his Master's return to heaven, John and his fellow-disciples were to be the instructors of the world. But before they could reflect light on others, they must be themselves enlightened; they must become learners before they were fitted for teachers. Not even the day of Pentecost with its profusion of gifts would fully qualify them for the office of apostles, without a pupilage in the school of Christ. For two years or more, therefore, they were under his personal superintendence.

Their Teacher was not merely imbued with truth, he was "the truth." He not only reflected light, he was "light" itself. They had no need of access to large libraries and huge volumes. All the treasures of science and literature could not furnish the knowledge required to fit them for their work; it could be found only in the teachings of Him in whom are all the treasures of "the God-head bodily."

Surrounded often by the sick, the palsied, the lunatic, they were taught the practical duties of

humanity—not by abstract precepts, but by the alluring living example of the compassionate Saviour himself. The main subjects of their investigation were not themes of interest in by-gone times; but topics which then agitated the multitude, or engrossed doctors of the law, were discussed in their presence by their Master with the gifted spirits of the age. Nor did they enjoy only the advantages of intellectual culture. While their Master passed through the cities and villages proclaiming the gospel in the synagogues and by the way-side, they were his constant attendants. And when the crowds had retired to their homes, the little group gathering around him were privileged to hear his own exposition of parables accommodated to the dull apprehension of the masses, or of truths veiled to save them from hasty rejection through prejudice or enmity. They enjoyed confidential intercourse with their Master. He mingled the dignity and duties of a teacher with the kindness and affection of an intimate friend. He corrected their false views of his mission to earth. He gently chid their wanderings, checked their presumption, and cheered their despondency. His public teachings, his private counsels, his family devotions, his heavenly temper, his spotless example, his beneficent, self-denying life, would mould their character so as easily to point out to the

world that "they had been with Jesus." It was as if the new Jerusalem had come down to men, and flesh and blood were training under its influence. Greece and Rome had their philosophers, Judea its divinely appointed teachers, but this little band surrounding the Saviour from day to day, were to be emphatically "the light of the world."

We might expect a rapid change in the character of John under the powerful influences to which he was now subject. And we might expect it the sooner, because the qualities of his mind seem to have been adapted to promote sympathy between him and his Master. So far as respects the human nature of Christ, they were doubtless more like each other in their native traits of character than either was like Peter.* This congeniality of taste and temper made John peculiarly susceptible to impressions from the instructions and society of Jesus.

The recollection of this brief period of intimate intercourse with the Saviour thrilled the bosom of John, even in old age. "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." Fain would

* Works of Robert Hall, vol. 1, p. 210.

he lead the whole church to that glorious Source of light which it had been his distinguished privilege to behold with open face.

Three of the apostles, of whom John was one, were treated by their Master with a certain degree of distinction. This was manifest on several occasions, especially in their selection to be "eye-witnesses of his majesty" when they "were with him in the holy mount." While he was engaged in prayer, the evening shadows gathered around them, and solemnity deepening into terror settled down on their hearts at his unwonted earnestness. Suddenly his face began to shine with the brightness of the sun, and his raiment became dazzling with light. The divinity within seemed beaming through the vesture of flesh, bathing all around with the radiance that pours on mount Zion above from "the throne of God and the Lamb." In like glory appeared two celestial messengers, Moses and Elias, conversing with Jesus on "his death which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." It was the same theme which, a few days before, Jesus had broached to his disciples, the meaning of which they did not understand. But they knew it must be something of surpassing interest, thus to occupy the brief interview of their Master with the ambassadors of heaven. Though overpowered with weariness and emotion, they saw what was passing

around them, and heard the voice which broke from the bright cloud, the ancient symbol of the divine presence, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear him."

As with invigorated faith and hope the three disciples came down the next day from the mount, disclosing in their faces, perhaps, like Moses, their intercourse with the invisible world, Jesus charged them not to speak of what they had witnessed until after his resurrection. Before that time, their testimony might have been discredited ; or if believed, it might defeat the object of his mission, for then the princes of this world "would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Peter, James, and John might have been envied by their companions, and new murmurings and disputings have broken out in the family of Jesus. Even with this injunction it may have produced such a result. The dispute among the apostles that occurred soon after—"which of them should be greatest"—may have been provoked by hints from the favored three respecting special manifestations of their Master's regard.

The Scriptures do not inform us why these three were selected to enjoy this peculiar favor, but doubtless "they excelled in gifts and graces." Of the three thus distinguished, John appears in some respects to have possessed the highest place in

his Master's love. As already intimated, this seems to have arisen from the congeniality in their dispositions and tastes. "The distinguishing features of our Lord's character, viewed as a perfect human being, were unquestionably humility and love; nor is it less certain, or less obvious, that these were the qualities most conspicuous in the character of the beloved disciple." This peculiar type of John's character, however, was not the product of mere human development. By nature gentle and susceptible, but capable of intense feeling, with a keen sense of what is unworthy or unbecoming, he seems, like others of a similar temperament, to have been exposed to sudden undue excitements. Some think that Christ, when he denominated the two brothers James and John "sons of thunder," intended to remind them of this mental characteristic, and put them on their guard against its excessive indulgence. The "sublime qualities of love, humility, and mildness, by which the writings of the evangelist and some features of his later life are distinguished, were the result of the transforming grace of God, of the influence of the Spirit of Christ on the disciple who had yielded himself" to his sway. This appears from several incidents narrated by the evangelists; and notwithstanding all his amiable constitutional qualities, the "beloved disciple" would gratefully

own, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It was to magnify this grace, doubtless, that the inspired historians record some imperfections in his early discipleship.

After residing in Galilee for nearly a year and a half, and performing "mighty works" which, even in the ignorance and depravity of "Tyre and Sidon," would have clothed them with the garments of penitence, Jesus set out on another visit to Jerusalem. His nearest route, which occupied a traveller on foot three days, was through the region of Samaria. Strict Jews, in consequence of religious and political hatred, would not take this route. To avoid passing through Samaria, they crossed the Jordan at Bethshean or Scythopolis, and passing down its eastern side to a point opposite Jericho, recrossed the river. Our Saviour had no sympathy with these prejudices. He took the direct road, as on a former journey, mingling with the inhabitants, and ready to accept their proffered hospitalities. He sent some of his attendants forward to prepare for him lodgings in one of the Samaritan villages through which he was to pass.

In the want of public houses among the Orientals, travellers were obliged to rely for entertainment on the people where they were overtaken by night. The rites of hospitality were regarded as sacred, and their infringement was esteemed no

common crime. But in the present case, the claims of kindness and good feeling were overborne by national prejudice and religious animosity. The Samaritan villagers knew this was the season for the feast of Tabernacles, and suspecting, perhaps, that Jesus was on his way to keep the festival in Jerusalem, they refused to entertain him even for a night. They could scarcely have been ignorant of his character and fame. Perhaps his conversation with one of their countrywomen on a former occasion, in which he condemned their worship on mount Gerizim, embittered their feelings and increased the harshness of their denial.

Weary, famished, and obliged to pass the night without refreshment, or seek it in some other quarter where they might experience similar rudeness and inhospitality, the disciples were in no state of mind to bear this rebuff patiently. Stung by this indignity offered to their Master, James and John hastily inquired, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?" They would not soon forget the reply, which, mingled with pity for their weakness, still savored of severity unusual to the lips of Jesus: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." As humbled and mortified at this deserved rebuke

of their impetuosity, the young men followed the compassionate Saviour to another village, they would feel how far they were from the full possession of his heavenly temper.

Among those who came up with Jesus from Galilee, were several women that ministered to his wants. Of this number was the mother of John. The peculiar marks of our Saviour's regard for John seem to have nourished the hope of Salome that both her sons would be special favorites in his kingdom. Emboldened by this expectation, and perhaps prompted by the young men themselves, whose thoughts of personal elevation may have received a new impulse from the promise just made by their Master, that the apostles should "sit on twelve thrones," she offered the well-known request for their advancement to the highest honors under the Messiah's government. The request was not only tinctured with selfishness, but was specially ill-timed. Jesus had just repeated the admonition that he was about to be betrayed, and after mockings and scourgings, to be crucified; but his earnest announcement of evil coming on himself made so little impression on the sons of Zebedee, that they do not seem to have apprehended its meaning. The reply of Jesus, "Ye know not what ye ask," must have shown them they were treading on forbidden ground.

But let us not look with too severe an eye on this conduct of the sons of Zebedee. Through their whole intercourse with Jesus, they had been constantly moving in scenes of astounding interest. They had not only seen the blind eye opened, the deaf ear unstopped, the withered limb made whole, a well-known friend coming forth in grave-clothes from the chamber of death, but they had themselves been invested with power to perform similar mighty works. "Even the devils" were made subject to their authority, while they proclaimed through the cities and villages of Israel the approaching reign of their Master. Is it wonderful that, in such circumstances, they should sometimes show the weakness of human nature, when daily witnessing events which might disturb the regular movements of the best disciplined intellect, and rouse the ambition of the meekest spirit? What but the power and presence of their divine Master could have shielded them from the temptations by which they were beset in this untried path?

The prejudices of the Jewish mind, which looked forward to the Messiah as a great temporal as well as spiritual Deliverer, yielded but gradually even in the disciples.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN AT THE MOUNT OF OLIVES—AT THE
FEAST OF THE PASSOVER.

THE last Sabbath before his crucifixion Jesus spent in Jericho, probably at the house of Zaccheus the publican. On the morrow, the first day of the week, he continued his journey towards Jerusalem, and in the evening arrived at Bethany. The people, gathering at the feast from all parts of the land and from distant countries, anxiously awaited his coming. Many were ready to acknowledge him as the expected Messiah, having heard of his raising Lazarus. The next day, as Jesus approached the city, they went out to meet him with the demonstrations of honor usually shown to oriental monarchs. Some spread their garments where he was about to pass, as the courts of the Persian palace are said to have been covered with purple, when Mordecai came out of the king's gate. Others broke off blooming branches from the palm-trees, which grew in great abundance on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho. Others carried bunches of blossoms in their hands, as was customary at the celebration of the tabernacle and dedication feasts, while they sung songs of praise. Amid their en-

thusiastic acclamations, Jesus entered the holy city, and it seemed as if he was in reality about to claim the throne of his great ancestor David.

The more probable such an event became, the keener would be the disappointment of the son of Zebedee, if he sought the friendship of Jesus for the sake of rank and power. But the recent denial of his request did not abate the affection of John for his Master, or his gratification at the applauses which greeted him on every side. His attachment to Jesus was not selfish, like that of Judas. The sudden onset of temptation might for a while make him appear, like the traitor, to be seeking his own advancement by following in the train of Christ, but it was in appearance and for a season only.

The second, third, and fourth day of the week in which he was crucified, Jesus spent in the temple, teaching the people and exposing the cavils of his enemies. At evening, he sought refreshment and repose at Bethany, under the friendly roof where he was always welcomed with gratitude and joy. The exhausting labors of the fourth day in the temple, and his public ministry, were closed with the memorable exclamation, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would

not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Borne down with grief at the obstinacy of his countrymen, and the woes they were about to incur by rejecting the Messiah, Jesus was for the last time departing from the sacred courts. He saw in clear prospect Jerusalem flowing with blood, the temple levelled with the ground, the people falling beneath the edge of the sword or scattered among the nations. The disciples, still dazzled by earthly splendor, called his attention to the temple rising in magnificence, "adorned with goodly stones and gifts," and thronged with worshippers. "See ye not all these things?" was the thrilling reply of their Master, whose thoughts were fixed on higher themes: "Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The earnestness and solemnity of his manner, unusual even with him, betokened to the disciples that events of no ordinary magnitude were at hand. As soon, therefore, as they had gone over the brook Kedron, and were seated on the mount of Olives in plain view of the city and temple, James and John in company with Peter and Andrew came to him privately to gain further information on these points. In reply to their inquiries, he disclosed the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and the scenes of the last judgment.

His discourse with the disciples on this occasion cannot even now be read without awe. How inexpressibly solemn must the words have been as they fell from the lips of Jesus himself!

As evening drew on, he returned to Bethany, where, at the house of Simon the leper, his friends made him a supper, not to display their wealth, or to indulge their own appetites while ostensibly honoring Jesus, or because they thought him on the point of assuming kingly power, and timely attention might secure favor and patronage. It was an entertainment prompted by affection and gratitude, where love and reason and thoughts of a higher life presided over the hour, where kindly feelings and social charities were quickened by sympathy, where sincerity and truth were not fettered by the forms or sacrificed to the demands of fashion. There was Lazarus, late clothed in the vestments of the tomb; there the disciples, with spirits still depressed by the predicted fate of their country and awed by the appalling scenes of the judgment-day; there the Son of God, in a few hours to bear the sins of the world on the cross. Fit gathering for the parting words and gifts of friendship, but what a place for treachery to weave its snares for the life of the innocent! The box of precious ointment, which at this feast the true and loving Mary poured on the feet of her benefactor, will to the end of

time make her name fragrant as its own perfume ; while to the false disciple it became the exciting cause of treason, death, and eternal infamy. What indignation must have swelled the bosom of the venerable apostle, when, half a century afterwards, he sketched the hypocrite mingling in these festivities with the friends of Jesus, and feigning special compassion for the poor, while plotting the death of his own Master !

The next morning, Jesus sent Peter and John to the city to make preparations for eating the passover. As stated in a previous volume of this series,* the houses at Jerusalem were thrown open for the use of the multitudes who came up to the feasts. The disciples made the necessary provision for the supper. Jesus himself came to the city from Bethany in the afternoon, and at evening sat down with the twelve to eat the passover, his last meal with the disciples before he was crucified.

In preparing for the approaching festival, the "old leaven" had just been cast out of the Jewish houses, but it seems to have been almost impossible to cast out the leaven of ambition from the hearts of the disciples. "There was still a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." With words of peace Jesus hushed

* Vol. 9, page 37.

their altercation and gathered his erring followers around him at the table. If John had joined in this outbreak of selfishness, after his recent reproof, we should not expect to find him on this occasion leaning on the bosom of his Master, the appropriate place, according to the usage of the times, for the most favored guest.

During the supper, probably at the point where it was then customary for the Jews in observing the passover to make ablutions, Jesus, in full view of his impending sufferings and of the glory that would follow, rose from the table, and girding himself with a towel, washed his disciples' feet. This menial service, so in contrast with their recent strife, would send the mantling blood through their cheeks, and teach them a lesson of humility and love not soon to be forgotten. Resuming his place at the table, he said in tones of touching tenderness, "The servant is not greater than his lord, neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him." Henceforth we read no more of harmony among the apostles being marred by selfishness and ambition.

How vapid and senseless, how like mockery, seem Romish pageants, exhibited before gaping thousands, in imitation of this godlike act of our Redeemer!

Jesus had already told his disciples that he was



about to be betrayed and crucified. With deep sorrow he now assured them that the traitor would be one of their own number. In amazement, each began to protest his innocence of such a purpose. Peter beckoned to John that he should ask Jesus who it was. As the beloved disciple was leaning on Jesus' bosom, he could more conveniently than any of his companions make the inquiry. Jesus privately gave him a sign which would disclose the traitor. When Judas had received the sop—the designated sign—he left the table before the Lord's supper had been instituted. Hastening to the chief priests, he consummated his treachery by offering to conduct a band of soldiers to the place whither he supposed Jesus would retire at the conclusion of the feast.

CHAPTER VII.

JOHN AT THE TRIAL AND CRUCIFIXION OF
JESUS.

At the close of the supper, Jesus went to the mount of Olives with his disciples, who probably were not aware that his departure was so near at hand. They supposed, doubtless, that he was retiring as usual to lodge at Bethany, or at the house of some kind friend in the neighborhood of the city. When they came to a place named Gethsemane, a garden owned perhaps by one of his followers, whither he had often resorted with his disciples, he took Peter, James, and John a little way apart from the rest, "and began to be sorrowful and very heavy." They had seen his divine glory on the mount of transfiguration—now they were to sympathize with him in his hour of trial, and witness his fortitude under human suffering. Exhausted by the exciting scenes of the day, and saddened by the words and looks of their Master, they were soon overcome with sleep. Gently reproving their delinquency, which he palliated on the ground of their weakness, he admonished them to be watchful that they might calmly and firmly meet the impending danger. Tired nature again rendered the caution vain. Just aroused from

sleep, the disciples, panic-struck when they saw their Master arrested by an armed band, sought their own safety by flight under cover of the darkness. Affection was paralyzed by fear, and even John for a time was found among the fearful and faint-hearted. But love and principle soon banished his terror. The distant torch-light revealed the course taken by the band on their return, and following close on their track, he entered with them into the city. Though known to the high-priest, and on this account more liable to be apprehended as a follower of Jesus,* he went boldly into the palace with his Master. Peter, who at first had followed the retiring soldiers "afar off," was now standing without at the door of the porch, fearing perhaps to venture further, lest he should be recognized as the person who smote off the ear of the high-priest's servant. At the request of John, the portress suffered Peter to pass through the porch into the open court of the palace, where the servants and official attendants were warming themselves around a fire of coals. "At the time of the Passover, the days are indeed quite warm in Palestine, but the nights and mornings are cold; so much so that snow sometimes falls."

* It is manifest, from the incident related by Mark, 14:51, 52, that the Sanhedrim designed to apprehend not only Jesus, but his disciples.

If we have failed in the offices of affection towards a dear friend—have spoken unkind words, or neglected due attentions when he is sick or sorrowful—how does the aching, self-condemning heart yearn to blot out the remembrance of the offence by officious and even needless services. Labor, fatigue, expense, suffering itself, are gladly courted for an opportunity to manifest our regret. When the first impulse of fear had subsided, John was fully conscious of his guilt in sacrificing friendship for his Master to the instinct of self-preservation. His penitent heart longed to express its grief for this delinquency. How eagerly would he have uttered in the ear of his Lord, "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." This he was not permitted to do; but as Jesus was probably examined before the high-priest in a room on the side or rear of the court, and open towards it, John might see his Master, and catch from him a forgiving look. By exposing himself to arrest as a follower of Jesus, he could show that he was ready to share his fate and suffer for his name.

When Jesus, early in the morning, was led bound from the palace of the high-priest, John 18 : 28, or from the council-chamber in the temple, Luke 22 : 66, to the judgment-hall of Pilate, John was not prevented by fear or shame from follow-

ing his Master. The superstitious Jews would not enter the house of the heathen governor, lest they should contract ceremonial defilement; but John seems to have gone into the judgment-hall, and been present at the interview between Jesus and Pilate, of which he gives a minute narrative. The Roman governor wavered. Now, awed by the manifest innocence, the calm dignity, the sublime sentiments of his prisoner, he seemed inclined to release him; now, swayed by the clamorous multitude without, he seemed ready to deliver him into their hands. Hope and fear alternated in the heart of the anxious disciple. But the conflict soon closed. Regard for personal welfare silenced the voice of humanity and conscience. Taking his place on the judgment-seat, which, according to the Roman custom, was in the open air on a raised pavement of mosaic work, in front of the pretorium or palace of the governor, Pilate surrendered Jesus to the will of his malignant persecutors, and at their request released Barabbas from prison. The blood-stained was pardoned—the faultless scourged and condemned to the cross.

Neither the sentence to this ignominious death, nor the mockery of the Roman cohort in the pretorium, deterred John from open proofs of attachment to the person and cause of his Master. He followed him on the weary way to the place of

execution. The derision of the chief priests and elders, the scorn of the soldiers, the railing of the passing travellers, fell unheeded on his ear. Grief, love, disappointed hope, deadened his heart to these outbursts of triumphant malice. With the mother of Jesus and other faithful women who had attended their beloved teacher from Galilee, he stood at the foot of the cross, alive to the anguish of its victim.*

His fidelity received a touching recompense, which would remove all doubt of the continued love and confidence of his Master. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother." And well was the trust executed. "From that hour he took her to his own home," and according to tradition nourished her with filial kindness till her death, about the year A. D. 48.

Whether, aside from the affectionate disposition of this disciple, any external reasons induced Jesus to intrust his mother to the care of John, we know not. His worldly circumstances, perhaps.

* John was probably the only one of the twelve that witnessed the change in the relenting malefactor, and it is probably to him we are indebted for this incident, though it is recorded only by Luke.

were better than those of the other disciples, and it is not according to the divine economy to work miracles, where the ordinary course of Providence secures the same results. Some suppose John had at that time a house in Jerusalem, where he appears to have resided for many years after the death of Jesus. How would John listen to the tale of maternal love respecting the sweet words and doings of his Master's childhood. How would Mary never tire of hearing her young friend recount the beneficent deeds and divine teachings that marked the official course of her son. But however John venerated the mother of his Saviour and friend, he never mentions her in his epistles; much less does he urge his readers to seek her intercession with Jesus, or offer to her prayers which she is not omnipresent to hear. If he rendered her such homage while she dwelt in his own family, it is incredible that he should never have recommended the same practice to others.

Nature, by no doubtful tokens of sympathy with the sufferer, had awed the jeering multitude, and they returned to the city smiting on their breasts from terror and remorse. But the faithful disciple still clung as if spell-bound to the cross. The fading sun, the quaking earth, the opening graves, had no terror for him. Some rough soldiers were approaching, but he thought not now of flight or

concealment. They broke the legs of the two malefactors, but it was needless to inflict this violence on Jesus, who was already dead. The spear thrust into the side of the victim to assure his death, seemed to enter the soul of John. The blood and water flowing from the wound left no room for doubt that the friend whom he loved, the Messiah in whom he trusted, was no longer among the living. The corpse hanging pale and bloody on the cross was all left him of his Master. Affection would pay the last mark of respect to the dead—but how, without money, influence, or patronage, could he obtain permission from the Roman governor to remove the body? And if permission was granted, the few timid women standing “afar off” could render him little aid in its burial.

A company now drew near, whose appearance indicated a more friendly intent. Two of the Jewish Sanhedrim, whom fear or policy kept back from avowing the living Jesus as the Messiah, were bringing expensive offerings in the face of obloquy and power to honor his lifeless remains. Members of the same tribunal, they must have known each other personally, but whether they had disclosed to one another their mutual belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, and met by previous appointment at the cross, is uncertain. Love needs no words to reveal itself. The lone, stricken dis-

ciple at once discerned friends to his Master in these strangers, and his bursting heart was relieved by their sympathy. With deep reverence they detached the dishonored body from the cross and bore it to the neighboring garden, which one of them seems to have owned. The shrinking females, who had been driven "aloof" from the scene of outrage and insult, now mingled with the mourning group, and performed the tender offices appropriate to the hands of gentleness and love. The body, hastily embalmed on account of the approaching Sabbath, was deposited by the generous Joseph in his own new tomb, and the bewildered, despairing disciple retired to the city.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

THE Sabbath which followed "was a high day" among the Jews, not only as it occurred during the great national festival when all Israel was gathered before the Lord, but as the day on which it was customary to offer the first-fruits at the temple. This ceremony was not to be dispensed with even when the second day of the festival was the Sabbath. The chief priests and elders, the scribes and Pharisees, might affect to disregard the startling phenomena attending the crucifixion; but the mass of the people, more susceptible to impressions from such causes, could not easily lay aside their apprehensions. To the disciples of Jesus it was a day of unmingled heaviness. Faith could not yet look forward to his resurrection. They never expected to see him in a bodily form on earth. Perplexed and dismayed, their thoughts dwelt on the darkness of the tomb. Fearful for their own safety, they concealed themselves in some obscure retreat to escape the malice of their enemies. What they should do, or whither betake themselves, they knew not.

Mary Magdalen and her companions had bought

spices, probably before the Sabbath began, still further to embalm the body. Regardless of danger, they were waiting for the slow hours to wear away which detained them from their work of love. At length the wished-for morning approached, but nature seemed to frown on their purpose. Again the earth heaved and trembled, still they faltered not. At earliest dawn they hastened forth from the city gate. Affection had not counted the difficulties of their task, but now they began to think of the great stone at the door of the sepulchre, which their feeble hands could not remove. Yet they slackened not their course. The office must be performed, they could not relinquish it. They came to the sepulchre; it was already open. The commotion of nature, which seemed an omen of ill, was only the earth heralding the descent of a mighty angel to roll away the stone, and greet the rising Jesus as he came forth from the tomb.

Unappalled, the helpless females entered the sepulchre. The body was gone. Mary Magdalen ran with the sad tidings to Peter and John, who seem to have lodged in a different part of the city from the rest. The chief priests and Pharisees, when they besought Pilate to set a watch over the body of Jesus, remembered his declaration that he should rise from the dead, but his friends in their grief and amazement seem to have forgotten it.

The two disciples hastened to the sepulchre. The young and eager John outran his companion; he stooped down and saw the grave-clothes, but shrunk instinctively from entering the mansion of the dead. He could die for Jesus, but perhaps would not have been able even in old age to look with composure on such a scene. Grace does not mould into the same likeness the constitutional peculiarities which distinguish individuals. In their endless variety of hue and shape, earth's flowers all drink of the same dews, and expand under the influence of the same sun. Peter went at once into the sepulchre, and was soon followed by John. The body was gone, as Mary Magdalen had reported, but the orderly condition in which the garments were left indicated that it was not stolen by violent hands. Thieves would have been much more ready to rifle the tomb of the garments and rich spices, than of the body which they inclosed; and friends would not have divested the body of its covering. As John began to recall and ponder the forgotten words of Jesus, the thought probably darted through his mind that his Master might indeed have risen from the dead. It was only "a germ of belief," but he returned to the city not hopeless that it might prove a reality.

Jesus, as he foretold, had been betrayed and crucified. One might suppose that confidently ex-

pecting the fulfilment of the other part of his prediction, the disciples would gather early around the sepulchre on the morning of the third day to hail the rising conqueror of death. Yet neither John nor any other follower of Jesus seems to have had, till this time, the expectation of his return to life. The "Scripture" too had taught that the flesh of the Messiah should not see corruption; yet this did not give them a conviction of the fact. How came it to pass, then, that a mere look at the orderly arrangement of "the linen clothes and the napkin," caused faith in the mind of the desponding disciple? Was this clearer evidence than the Scripture, or more impressive than the asseveration of Jesus himself? Why these different results of evidence? Why insensibility in one case, and faith ripening into conviction in the other? The dispensation of the Spirit was beginning to dawn, the Holy Ghost was bringing the words of Jesus to John's remembrance; the mists of earthliness and prejudice were passing away, and truth was finding an entrance into his heart. It is the work of the same Spirit to "reprove the world of sin," wherever the gospel is preached; and when he speaks to the soul, instrumentalities seemingly powerless become mighty to its salvation.

John's inference from the condition of the grave-clothes was speedily confirmed by Mary Magdalen's

report of her conversation with Jesus ; and a few hours after, his doubts were dissipated by Peter's announcement that he had seen the Lord. At evening, Jesus himself appeared in the midst of his disciples, who, having shut the doors for fear of the Jews, were joyfully rehearsing the different reports of his resurrection. Eight days after, he appeared to them again in the same manner.

At the close of the Passover, the apostles, as they had been instructed by Jesus, retired into Galilee, to meet with many others on a mountain which he had pointed out for a public interview with his followers. His trial and crucifixion, as well as the report of his resurrection, would soon be known in that region ; for the people returning from the feast would spread the news of these strange occurrences. Scarcely six months had passed since John left this part of the country with his Master, but how changed his views in that short period ! He was now among his acquaintances, and probably at the home of his childhood. His father Zebedee seems to have been dead, but Salome, her personal attendance on the Saviour being no longer needed, would hardly fail to return to Galilee, and be present at the convocation of his friends about to be held on the mount.

While the apostles were waiting the appointed time for the assembly, they went out one night to

engage in their old craft of fishing on the lake of Tiberias. The painful, and scarcely less the overjoyous events of the last few days might demand a relaxation of their minds, a change in their tone of thought and feeling. It was good for them to commune with the past among the familiar scenes of youth, and think of the way in which they had been led by Providence. Nor would they be idle when all around were active, and some of them might need the fruits of their labor for sustenance. It was common among their countrymen at that time to combine the office of teacher with some trade or manual employment.

They caught nothing during the night. At early dawn, a man whom they did not recognize in the imperfect light hailed them from the shore, kindly inquiring as to their success in fishing. They told him they had caught nothing. He advised them to cast their net on the right side of the boat. Supposing there might be some indication of success in that quarter, they followed his suggestion. The enormous draft of fishes at once led John to suspect that the stranger was no other than Jesus himself. Perhaps, too, his ear with the quick discernment of love had detected the tones of his Master's voice. They partook of a meal with Jesus on the shore of the lake ; after which occurred the affecting conversation between the Saviour and

the penitent Peter, so graphically described by the evangelist, John 21 : 15-23. More than fifty years had transpired, and Peter had glorified God by a martyr's death, when John erected this enduring "monument," as it has been aptly termed, to the memory of his brother apostle, the partner and friend of his early days.

Humbled and melted as Peter must have been by the searching address of Jesus, and depressed by the intimation of trials that would befall him in old age, he could not restrain his "hankering curiosity" to learn what would become of John. From the reply of Jesus, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" it was noised abroad among the churches that the beloved disciple would continue on earth till the advent of Christ to judgment, and then would enter into his kingdom without the pains of death. John mentions this prevalent rumor only to show its fallacy and disclaim the distinction which it conferred. It however kept its hold of the popular mind for ages, and has not wanted advocates among enthusiasts even in modern times.

A large part of the public ministry of Jesus had been spent in Galilee. Here most of his mighty works were wrought. Here his followers were as yet more numerous than in any other part of the country. Accordingly we find more than five hun-

dred of his friends—Matt. 28 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 6— assembling on the appointed day to meet him on the mountain. How Jesus had been occupied, or where he had been since his recent appearance at the lake of Tiberias, is not ours to know. The apostles and others present who had already seen the Saviour since he arose from the dead, needed no confirmation of their faith. When he appeared in the midst of the assembly, they bowed down and worshipped him. Some who had only heard a report of his resurrection, were at first wavering in their belief of its reality, but their doubts seem to have been soon scattered. The young man of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, even Lazarus himself we might expect to find at such a gathering ; and it could not long seem a thing incredible that he who had raised these from the dead should himself arise, and according to his promise meet his disciples in Galilee.

Neither of the evangelists has described this interview between Jesus and his followers. As he did to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, and to the eleven on the evening of the same day, he doubtless on this occasion showed from the Scriptures the necessity of his sufferings to atone for sin, the true nature of his kingdom, and his exaltation to be “head over all things to the church.” His hearers could now understand and “bear”

some things which he thought it out of place to teach them before his death. John 16:12. Providence had shed light on prophecy, and truths which would have been unintelligible and unheeded, when early in their discipleship he taught them on the mount, now found ready access to their understandings and hearts. But solemn as was the interview, and good as it was to be there, it must come to a close. With the impressive charge to make known his name to all nations, the Saviour took a final leave of his friends in Galilee.

Returning to Jerusalem, the apostles enjoyed one more interview with their Master, who commanded them to remain in that city until they were "baptized with the Holy Ghost." Their minds were not yet fully disenchanted of the delusion that he was about to establish a temporal sovereignty, or at least to give preëminence to the Jews, and almost under the shadow of the cloud, his triumphal car to heaven, they inquired, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

CHAPTER IX.

JOHN AT THE PENTECOST.

WHEN the cloud had received the Saviour out of sight, the apostles returned to Jerusalem—not sad and desponding, like children suddenly bereft of a father on whom they leaned for protection and support, but full of hope and joy. Luke 24 : 52, 53. As they came over mount Olivet and entered the temple, one who had seen them timorous and downcast when their Master, a few days before, was lying in the sepulchre, could not but be struck with the change. The spirit of heaviness had departed, and they seemed as if approaching the sacred courts, not as orphans, but in the garment of praise to present a thank-offering. And well might they rejoice and be glad. Though not present in a tangible form, he to whose hands was intrusted “all power in heaven and in earth,” was still their friend and Saviour. Proved to “be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead,” they had now seen him with their own eyes ascending to his Father. Faith had become sight. A vision of angels had assured them that he would again visit earth. And he had promised the speedy coming of another Friend who would supply his

place in their affections and sympathies, and with a mighty hand guard them from evil. They did not, indeed, comprehend all involved in the promise of "the Comforter;" but their Master, who never exaggerated the value of his gifts, had declared that the presence of the "Spirit of truth" would be better than his own. Add to this, that they seem at length to have entertained more correct notions of their "high calling" as messengers of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and we shall cease to wonder at their grateful praises.

Gathering together in an upper room, as some think in the house of Mary the mother of Mark, where Peter, when let out of prison by an angel, found a large company engaged in praying for his release, about one hundred and twenty of the followers of Jesus spent the ten days between his ascension and Pentecost in prayer and praise to God. The narrative, Acts 1 : 13, 14, specifies some who were present. Among these were the apostles, the mother and kinsmen of Jesus. The women who came up with him from Galilee were there. Though unnamed, we cannot doubt that some of the women of Jerusalem, among whom there seems to have been not a few believing in his Messiahship, Luke 23 : 27, 28, were also there. And what forbids us to suppose that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were sometimes found

in this praying circle? They were fully committed to the cause of Jesus by their significant acts after his crucifixion, and by consorting with his friends they would add nothing to the taunts of their fellow-members of the Sanhedrim. The new evidence that he was the expected Messiah would not weaken their faith, nor the scorn of their old associates dispose them to relinquish the confidence and holy love manifested at the cross and the sepulchre.

The annual Jewish festival of the ingathering of the harvest was approaching—strangers from every quarter of the country and from distant lands were flocking to Jerusalem. Many foreign Jews had taken up a residence there, either to enjoy for a season the services at the temple, or, as is still common, to end life in the holy city. Early in the morning of the day of Pentecost, a sound like a mighty rushing wind filled the house where the friends of Christ were assembled, and tongues like fire rested on the heads of each—proclaiming the descent of the Spirit, which pervaded them all, and instantly empowered them to speak in divers languages.

Of all the disciples, perhaps John, from the qualities of his mind and heart, felt most deeply the words of Jesus respecting the coming and offices of the "Comforter." At any rate, "with respect

to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, he is distinguished from the other evangelists as the one who has preserved most of the prophecies of our Lord concerning it." How would he rejoice at these tokens that "the invisible representative" of his Master was present. How real now seemed the saying of Jesus, I will not leave you orphans: I will return to you.

Tidings of these strange events were spread throughout the city. A multitude hastening to the place were astonished, when addressed, each in his own tongue, by plain men evidently without literary culture, who, from their "broad and rustic tone," or from some other source, they knew were natives of the rude, despised region of Galilee.

While the apostles were joyfully rehearsing the wonderful work of God in raising Jesus from the dead, and taking him to heaven, mockers were not wanting who ascribed their excitement to the free use of wine, as mockers are rarely wanting where the effusions of the Spirit are manifest in the conversion of sinners to God. To divert the minds of men from his work, any explanation, however improbable, will at such times be pressed into service. Peter, with the eleven, indued with confidence as well as language by the Holy Ghost, showed how incredible it was that they would be impious enough to become drunk on so holy a day

as the Pentecost, and at so early an hour; especially as strict Jews were not accustomed, during their festivals, to taste of food or drink before the close of the morning sacrifice, offered at "the third hour," or nine o'clock. Illumined from on high to interpret the Scriptures, he showed with a force which they could not resist, that such a scene had been predicted by one of their own prophets, and that David himself had foretold the death and resurrection of the Messiah. Probably John and others of the apostles, addressed the multitude on this occasion. As the result of the whole, more than three thousand, embracing, we may suppose, persons from every country inhabited by Jews, were joined in fellowship with the apostles. A visible form was thus given to that "kingdom of heaven," that reign of the Messiah, whose near approach they had been sent forth to proclaim in the lifetime of their Master.

With what mingled exultation, amazement, and perplexity would the apostles look on the sudden increase of their little company! These numerous converts gathering around them at the close of the day, must have teaching, guidance, government. Some of them by adopting the new faith were cut off from their common means of support, and must be provided with sustenance. The apostles must take the lead in giving shape to these unorganized

elements—in supplying these unexpected wants. A new era was begun in their history. New light dawned on their understanding. They now began to see more clearly the nature of their apostleship—the relation they were to sustain to the Messiah's empire on earth—the services they were to perform in its extension. They must be “kings” to direct, and “priests” to instruct. They could not lean on a Master bodily present for aid in these trying duties, though before his ascension he doubtless gave them general instructions as to the management of his church. Acts 1:3. But they could ask counsel of the “Spirit of truth,” and to secure regard for their authority, they wrought “wonders and signs.”

The active temper, habits, and age of Peter would fit him for a prominent part on an occasion requiring promptness and self-reliance. From the gentle meditative nature of John, we should not expect to find him conspicuous in stirring scenes like these. If, as is commonly thought, he was the youngest of the apostles, this would dispose him to let his older and more experienced associate occupy the first place in publicly advocating their cause, as well as in regulating the concerns of the newly gathered brotherhood. Protected by their exalted Saviour, his followers for a time mingled daily in worship in the courts of the temple,

secure from the malice of their enemies ; and full of gladness, they went with the voice of prayer and praise from house to house, among the recent converts—by their devoted spirit winning the favor of the people and increasing the number of their fraternity.

CHAPTER X.

JOHN AND THE LAME MAN—JOHN IN PRISON.

UNLIKE as Peter and John were in native qualities, they were often in each other's company, and they seem to have been bound to each other by special ties. As is common in life, this dissimilarity may have even cemented more closely their friendship. The defects and weaknesses of the one may have been remedied by the opposite traits of the other. The strong, hardy, fearless fisherman, too, may have gained an influence over his more yielding partner in their former occupations at the sea of Tiberias, which would enter even into their apostleship.

About this time they went up "together" to the temple one afternoon, at three o'clock, the hour of evening sacrifice and prayer. A lame man, who had never been able to walk, was lying at one of the principal gates of the courts of the temple which was called "Beautiful." He was carried thither every day, that the people as they went up to worship might extend him relief. Here he might expect sympathy from the pious who communed in the temple services with "the Father of mercies;" and here, too, they who did "alms, that

they might have glory of men," as the Pharisees of those times were reproved by our Saviour for doing, would be specially lavish of their charities. It was his only resource for supplying his daily wants. There was no public provision among the heathen for supporting the poor—no hospital, where the sick and infirm might be taken care of; nor is it probable that there was then any thing of this sort among the Jews. Such institutions are the fruit of the beneficent spirit of Christianity.

This poor cripple was more than forty years old, and had lain there so long, that he was not only well known to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but to people from other parts of the country, and to pilgrims who came to the feasts from foreign lands. Year after year these came and returned to their homes, while he was still helpless and unable to walk a single step. Peter and John had not improbably seen him often as they went with their Master to the temple. As they were now entering the gate, he begged them to give him some money. But rich as they were in faith, and favorites as they were of the King of heaven, they had no money to give. So it is often with the friends of Christ. With melting sympathy for the poor and suffering, they have no earthly treasure to impart for their relief. This is one of the ills of poverty hardest for them to bear. Uncomplaining

under personal deprivations, they are sometimes tempted to murmur at the want of power to alleviate the miseries of others. Wealth to decorate their persons or their houses they ask not ; the distinctions and comforts which it bestows on its possessor they covet not ; the lordly owners of palaces and broad acres they envy not : but to be obliged to turn away from the suppliant orphan, who thinks they have the means of assistance, and ascribes their denial of aid to niggardliness—to feel the yearnings of pity, yet be accounted unfeeling, even to bring reproach on religion as if covetous, when powerless to help—these are among their sorest trials.

Happily, the two favored apostles, though destitute of worldly goods, were not required to look on misery they could not relieve. To give “silver and gold” was in their case out of the question ; but they could give the cripple what is far better, a sound body, instead of one feeble, if not racked with pain—a capacity to earn a living, instead of begging it—a feeling of independence, instead of reliance on stinted, reluctant charity—a power to bear the burdens of others, instead of being himself a burden. Fixing a steady gaze on the waiting mendicant, Peter bid him look on them. This awakened his expectation of a gift, for he could not think that honest, kind-hearted men, as the apostles



seemed to be, would excite hope merely to disappoint it. When at length Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none," the poor invalid may for an instant have thought the stranger was indeed sporting with his calamity, as during the long years he lay at the gate some may have done. The apostle, however, instantly assured him he would do all he could for his relief; adding with intense earnestness, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up, and walk." That name had often in contemptuous tones fallen on the ear of the lame man, as the Jewish rulers issued from the gate irritated by the teachings of Jesus in the temple. Sometimes he had heard it spoken with reverence by the common people, as they came forth from the sacred courts delighted with his words of truth and grace. How he felt at such times in regard to the character of Jesus, we know not. It is not probable that he looked on him then as the Messiah, or believed in his power to work miracles, for in that case we might expect him to have sought and found healing mercy. However this may be, he had now faith to be healed. The late occurrences may have changed his views and feelings. Seizing his hand, Peter raised him up; and the impotent man found to his surprise, that he could not only stand, but walk like other people. Overjoyed by the new-born power, he kept walking, and leaping,

and praising God, while entering into the courts of the temple with the apostles, still holding fast their hands, as if not yet assured of his recovery, or unwilling to part from his benefactors. The people were filled with astonishment, and were ready to ascribe the miracle to the apostles themselves. They promptly disclaimed it ; they would not arrogate the honor of doing what they were able to accomplish only as the agents of their risen Saviour, who, they took the opportunity to prove, was the long expected Messiah.

For a short time after the resurrection of their Master, the apostles were not molested by public authority. They seem not even to have attracted the attention of the government. The chief priests and rulers doubtless thought that by putting Jesus to death, they had dispelled the belief in his divine mission. But this cure of the lame man in the midst of a crowd to whom he was well known, and the boldness of the apostles in ascribing the cure to the power of one whom they had recently rejected as an impostor, roused both their fears and their indignation. The matter must be dealt with promptly, lest their previous plotting should be of no avail, and the last end should prove worse than the first. While the apostles were yet addressing the multitude, the chief priests and the Sadducees, with the captain of the temple, whose duty it was

to maintain order in the sacred courts, arrested them, and thrust them into prison. The Sadducees were particularly active on this occasion, as their doctrine, that there is no resurrection, was directly assailed by the claim that Jesus had risen from the dead.

As it was now "eventide," the examination of Peter and John was for want of time postponed until morning. When called before the Sanhedrim on the next day, undeterred they preached "Jesus Christ and him crucified" as the only medium of salvation. Commanded with threats to forbear speaking in this name, they replied, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." They might have heard the prohibition in silence, thus leaving the rulers to suppose they meant to obey the order. But they told the council they must publish their message, that necessity was laid upon them, a necessity too pressing to be restrained by the fear of man. They felt that the gospel was to make its way in the world, not by concessions to power, interest, or luxury, but by aggressions on every thing hostile to its progress. Confounded by their spirit and bold utterance of truth which could not be gainsayed, the council dismissed them with an admonition to speak no more to the people in the hated name of their Master. So intrepid and

forcible a defence by men who appeared to be "unlearned and ignorant," excited wonder in the council. They were constrained to ascribe it to their training in the family of Jesus. Perhaps they now recollected that they had seen them in his company. In that corrupt and selfish age, where else should such firmness and sacrifice for truth have had its origin? The only wonder is, that witnesses of the unblenching courage of the prisoners and their regard to right, should expect to stop their mouths by the force of authority and threats.

When Peter and John rejoined their associates, in tones indicating any thing but an intention of compliance, they told them of the prohibition by the government to publish any farther the resurrection of Jesus. Catching the spirit of the two apostles, the whole company besought grace to speak yet more boldly in his behalf. The place where they were assembled was shaken in token of their Master's approbation, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Such was the issue of the first attempt to coerce the church of Christ to conform its teachings to popular caprice and governmental authority.

So many wonderful cures were now wrought by the apostles in Jerusalem, that it would almost seem Jesus himself had returned to dwell among

men. The very streets of the city were lined with the beds and couches of the sick, that at least the shadow of Peter might pass over them. Jerusalem was thronged with people from the neighboring cities, bringing their diseased relatives to be healed. On every side were seen significant proofs of the power of the new religion.

The indignation of the chief priests and the Sadducees could no longer be restrained. They thrust the apostles again into prison ; but the angel of the Lord burst open the prison doors, and set them free. The rulers now began to fear the wrath of the people, if they dealt harshly with the prisoners ; but the bold and almost defiant defence of the apostles made them cast aside the counsels of prudence, and set themselves to devise some pretext for putting them to death. Gamaliel, one of the most sagacious and honored members of the Sanhedrim, advised them to leave the matter to the disposal of Providence, since, if Jesus was really the true Messiah, any attempt to check the progress of his kingdom would be useless and dangerous. This suggestion from Nicodemus or Joseph of Arimathea would have been rejected at once ; but coming from such a quarter, it was received with favor. So, after scourging the prisoners, they set them at liberty.

The popularity of Gamaliel and his reputation for

wisdom carried the measure he proposed through the council, but we may question whether the Sadducees were entirely satisfied with the result. The alternative, "if it be of God," implies the resurrection of Jesus, and of course the very doctrine which they so bitterly opposed. Gamaliel was a Pharisee, and it has been suggested that his advice may be owing as much to sectarian jealousy as to worldly wisdom or candor.

CHAPTER XI.

JOHN AT SAMARIA—DEATH OF JAMES HIS BROTHER.

THE apostles were now, for a time, permitted without molestation to preach in the name of their Master, both in the temple and in private houses. But this season of tranquillity was of short continuance. The church was soon stained with the blood of the martyr Stephen. This was only the prelude to a violent persecution, to escape which many of the new community fled into the remote parts of Judea and Samaria. It was necessary that the apostles should stay at Jerusalem to instruct, comfort, and watch over the members remaining in that city. Protected by their Master, they seem not to have been imprisoned, as multitudes were, both of men and women, by the furious, persecuting Saul, or even to have been summoned before the council.

A few months previous to his death, Jesus had journeyed through the region of Samaria, and he must have been well known to many of the people. His miracles and teachings prepared them to acknowledge him as the Messiah, whom they expected in common with the Jews. The preaching of

Philip, confirmed by miracles, readily produced conviction in their minds, and they received the gospel with joy. This was grateful news to the apostles at Jerusalem, and they deputed two of their number, Peter and John, to carry forward the work. The mission was one of great delicacy and responsibility. They had not yet learned that "Greek and Jew, bond and free," could all be "one in Christ Jesus." None but those trained in Judaism had joined their community, and no small share of wisdom and prudence was required in admitting people of a different origin and religion into the church. This was eminently true in the present case. The Jews and the Samaritans had long looked on each other with bitter hatred. The apostles could not have forgotten their harsh repulse from a Samaritan village, and the churlish denial of hospitality to their Master. Could such prejudice and ill-will coalesce in one community so as to allow peace and good-fellowship? This was a serious inquiry, and the most honored and trusted in the apostleship would be summoned to solve it. The selection of Peter and John to dispose of the matter, shows the estimation in which they were held by their associates. This distinction is specially worthy of notice in the case of the latter, who, as has been already remarked, is supposed to have been the youngest of the twelve disciples.

The particular part performed by John during this mission, the sacred record does not specify. In conjunction with Peter, he admitted the Samaritan converts to a union with the followers of Christ, as they had received like gifts of the Holy Ghost. The two apostles having executed the trust for which they were deputed by their brethren, returned to Jerusalem.

At this point the sacred penman begins the history of the great apostle of the Gentiles, whose labors are the chief theme of the subsequent narrative. Henceforth, the notices of the "acts" of the original apostles, are comparatively brief. For a period of several years, the name of John does not occur again in the sacred record. It is supposed that he resided, during this interval, at Jerusalem, aiding in the government and instruction of the church, and doubtless also, in connection with his fellow-apostles, preaching in the neighboring cities.

About the year A. D. 44, James the brother of John was put to death by Herod, grandson of Herod the Great. Tradition says that "the officer who conducted him to the tribunal, was so influenced by the bold declaration of his faith as to embrace the gospel and avow himself a Christian—in consequence of which he was beheaded at the

same time." The ruthless sword had exalted the martyr, first of his fellow-apostles, to the promised "throne," and secured for him earliest the "appointed kingdom;" but still, the violent death of his brother would be a heavy blow to the stricken heart of John. Few were ever bound together by ties more tender than united the two sons of Zebedee. They were brothers in Christ as well as by natural birth. Children of the same family, who are early separated by the visitations of Providence or the varied pursuits of business, in later years often become comparative strangers to each other. But James and John had trodden the path of life together from the outset. Together they had shared the innocent pleasures of childhood, and suffered its griefs—together bowed at the family altar, and drunk in the teachings of their pious mother concerning the promised Messiah—together, too, they left their home at the call of Jesus, and were fellow-learners in his school till he ascended to heaven. For many years, they had been colleagues in the supervision of the church at Jerusalem, participating in its responsibilities, its joys, and its trials. Other apostles, it is true, were in their fellowship—partners loved and trusted—but there were none in whose society the grateful memories of opening life would be so refreshing, amidst the wearing duties and cares of

manhood. Though apostles, they were still men. Christian sympathy had not expelled natural affection from their bosoms, but rather purified and strengthened it. The early home at Bethsaida would not be forgotten because they were looking for a home in the new Jerusalem, nor would their common relationship to Salome be swallowed up in their common fellowship with Jesus. Dear is the unity of brethren where kindly sympathies and courteous acts impart a charm to the domestic circle, but dearer still where natural affection is allied with graces born and nurtured in heaven.

Painful as was this sudden bursting of the ties of brotherhood to the susceptible heart of John, it could not have been entirely unexpected. He must often have pondered the solemn announcement of his Master, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." Its import he could not mistake after the crucifixion of Jesus. The sons of Zebedee, through all their subsequent life, might say with another apostle, "We have the sentence of death within ourselves." The headless body of his brother would confirm to John the truth of his Master's prediction, and be a memento of what he might himself expect when his work on earth was finished. The event indeed showed that he was not to end his life by martyrdom, though he was

honored by enduring trials scarcely less severe for the name of Jesus.

About the year A. D. 50 or 51, Paul, on a visit to Jerusalem, Gal. 2 : 9, found John one of the "pillars" of the church in that city. Peter was residing there at the same time. The latter, Paul had met on a previous visit, Gal. 1 : 18, but this, so far as the history informs us, was his first interview with John. At least, while Paul was spending a fortnight with Peter, John probably was not in Jerusalem. Gal. 1 : 19 Paul's next visit to Jerusalem, Acts 11 : 30, seems to have been during Herod Agrippa's persecution, when, probably, none of the apostles remained in the city. The visit to which Paul refers, Gal. 2 : 9, was probably the same which is mentioned in Acts 15 : 2, when in company with Barnabas he went up to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders respecting the relation in which the Gentiles stood to certain ceremonial rites imposed by the Mosaic law on the Jews. In the discussions on this interesting occasion, John, with characteristic modesty, seems to have taken no active part. The addresses of James and Peter are sketched by the historian, but John appears to have been a mere listener. And it is only from an incidental allusion to him in the letter to the Galatians, that we are made aware of his presence in the assembly. But to

Paul's observing eye it was manifest that the silent apostle swayed an influence not less than that of his more prompt and active colleagues. He was evidently a "pillar" in the metropolitan church, and the apostle to the Gentiles would eagerly grasp the right hand of fellowship, Gal. 2:9, extended with calm dignity and a countenance radiant with sincerity and kindness. What a glow of feeling would kindle in his bosom as he gazed on the face of the "disciple whom Jesus loved," and seemed to behold there the mirrored gentleness, humility, and benevolence of his Redeemer.

CHAPTER XII.

JOHN AT EPHESUS—HIS WRITINGS AND DEATH.

ONE after another, the apostles went forth from Jerusalem to publish the gospel in distant heathen lands. John seems to have remained in that city latest of the twelve; partly, perhaps, from the trust committed to his care by Jesus on the cross, which pointed out a fixed residence as his duty during the lifetime of Mary, and partly because his peculiar qualities were best suited for such service. The diversity in mental and moral gifts as well as in physical capacity among the ministers of Christ, indicates their appropriate sphere of labor. One delights in action; another delights equally in contemplation and study. Duties which only call forth the powers of one, paralyze, it may be, the powers of another. One seems in his element while struggling with difficulties; another shrinks from opposition, or encounters it at a ruinous expense of body and mind. "The Lord has need" of all this variety, and there is room enough for it all in his vineyard.

John was of a temperament which perhaps better fitted him by a life of love to extend the influ-

ence of the gospel where it was already planted, than like Peter or Paul to carry it to the unevangelized nations. He would rather turn men from their wrong courses by the power of love than of reproof. A gentle and benignant spirit breathes in every page of his writings. Garrison duty, which some might regard as irksome, our apostle would prefer to the varied, shifting scenes of the camp and the field. Peter with his energy and courage, Paul with his glowing zeal and ceaseless activity, found their proper work in pushing the outposts of Christianity into heathen kingdoms; while John, by his gentleness and moderation, was specially fitted to hush the contentions and soothe the irritations which could not but exist in churches newly formed from discordant materials.

After Paul had left Ephesus and Proconsular Asia, divisions and errors became prevalent, as he had predicted, in the churches of that region. This made it necessary for some one of dignity and authority to enter into his labors, and complete the work which he had there begun. The apostle John seems to have been selected for this purpose. The destruction of Jerusalem was now drawing nigh. The Christians had retired, or were about retiring from that city, and John was at this time perhaps the only survivor of those who had constituted the original family of Jesus. When the church at

Jerusalem was scattered, he would have few attachments to retain him in his native land. He accordingly is supposed to have removed to Ephesus, and taken the supervision of the churches in that region.

These churches, as most others early planted by the apostles, were composed of Jews and Gentiles. Trained under the influence of different religions, they could not be expected to coalesce in the doctrines and duties of Christianity without occasional jarring. The Jew would press upon his Gentile brother some of the observances of the Mosaic ritual which the gospel had superseded; and the Gentile would wish to retain some practices which, indifferent in themselves, would be offensive to the Jew. This led to recriminations, and in the end parties were formed hurtful to the peace and prosperity of the churches. While the great apostle of the Gentiles lived, the essential doctrines of the gospel were maintained, notwithstanding these dissensions. It is manifest, however, from intimations in some of Paul's epistles, that the spirit of Judaism, ever tending to contract the expanding circle of Christianity, was gaining strength and threatening to undermine the liberty with which Christ had made his people free; while the simplicity of the gospel was in danger of being corrupted by an admixture with heathen philosophy. To

reconcile these discordant elements, and restore harmony without sacrificing truth, required no common union of firmness and moderation. If the mediator between the parties needed the weapons of logic, he needed still more the allurements of love. He should be more desirous to be a peacemaker than a leader—should care less for the exact forms in which truth is expressed, than for its living power and essence. If a Jew, he should not be a bigot to the rites of Judaism; if a Gentile, while jealous of his Christian liberty, he should look with candor approaching reverence upon attachment to a dispensation which long held alone the written communications of heaven to our race.

Such an one was our apostle as he came among the churches of provincial Asia. He was no party man. For this he had no desire and no peculiar qualifications. In the early history of the church there was a party for Peter, a party for Paul, and a party for James, but we never read in the New Testament of a party for John. There was nothing in his character or life around which a party could rally. His predominant quality, especially in his later days, was love; and love makes no parties, it wishes none; it would have all men brethren. It is apt to take ground between extreme parties among true Christians, not because it is timid and time-serving—for no quality has more gen-

uine firmness—but because the middle way is generally nearest truth and right.

It has often been remarked how well fitted for the times and the various parts necessary to be acted, were the chief leaders of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Without this diversity in station, mental qualities, and acquisitions, success would have been impossible. The ardor, fearlessness, and energy of Luther were little more needed in the progress of the work, than the learning and moderation of Melancthon, and the protecting shield of the Elector of Saxony. In the earlier reformation begun by our Saviour and carried forward by the apostles, the adaptation of the agents to the work to be accomplished is no less remarkable. If all the apostles had been as zealous as Paul for the conversion of the Gentiles, the Jews might have been repelled from the church of Christ. If, on the other hand, all had been as careful as James not to offend Jewish prejudices, the distinctive features of the gospel might for a time have been veiled. Between these extremes, the influence of Peter—bold, fearless, yet slowly yielding up his Jewish prejudices—was needed to bring his countrymen from undue attachment to Judaism; while the meditative, devotional spirit of John—not tenacious of forms, but pouring its love through almost any channel—was equally necessary in reconciling

gentile Christians to the attachment of the Jews to old rites and practices.

John probably removed to Ephesus about the year 65 or 66 after Christ. He was now at an age which naturally shrinks from new and responsible enterprises, and clings to old scenes and habits. But he cheerfully entered on an untried field of labor, carrying with him a ripe experience, a character matured by the grace of God, and a love for his Master which inspired age with the ardor and activity of youth.

Ephesus was well fitted for an apostolical residence. It lay on the Mediterranean, in the centre of ancient civilization. A commercial city, the capital of Lesser Asia, and renowned for the magnificent temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, it was the resort of men from all parts of the globe. It had ready communication with the other cities of that region in which churches had been gathered by Paul.

We have no detailed account of the labors and successes of John in this mission. The quiet deeds of love and goodness supply few materials for history as it is ordinarily written. Men are not wont to record the noiseless fertilizing operations of the sun and dew. The tornado, the flood, the pestilence, record their own doings in desolations and woes not soon to be forgotten. His messages "to

the seven churches" situated in this part of Asia, imply his supervision over them, and their recognition of his authority. His influence in this region was eminently happy, and traces of it remained for several centuries in the modified sentiments and practices of these churches.

John was banished to the desert isle of Patmos by one of the Roman emperors—Eusebius says, Domitian, though others suppose it was Nero. In this island, he saw the series of visions which he describes in the Revelation with a vividness of imagination and a force of language excelled by no writer of the New Testament, if by any in the Old.

This is not the place to discuss the different views of commentators and others respecting the contents of the book. The object of the writer seems to have been "not merely a local or partial one." The Apocalypse is suited to all. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." "But this general characteristic is perfectly consistent with the fact that it arose out of specific circumstances, and was primarily meant to subserve a definite end. When first written, it was destined to suit the peculiar circumstances of the early Christians. The times were troublous. Persecution had appeared in various forms. The followers of Christ were exposed

to severe sufferings for conscience' sake. Comparatively few and feeble, the humble disciples of the Lamb seemed doomed to extinction." The writer of the Apocalypse was inspired "to present to them such views as were adapted to encourage them to steadfastness in the faith—to comfort them in the midst of calamity—to arm them with resolution to endure all the assaults of their foes. Exalted honors, glorious rewards, are set before the Christian soldier who should endure to the end. A crown of victory—the approbation of the Redeemer—everlasting felicity: these are prepared for the patient believer. In connection with such representations, the final triumph of Christianity and the Messiah's peaceful reign with his saints, form topics on which the writer dwells with emphatic earnestness." Though the power and policy of the world were arrayed against the suffering Christians of primitive times, "the statements of the writer all tend to the conclusion that truth should make progress in the earth, and the church emerging out of all her struggles, wax stronger and stronger."

In style and manner, the Apocalypse is so diverse from the gospel of John, that some have not hesitated to affirm both cannot be the production of the same author. This diversity, however, shows the resources of the apostle's mind, as in-

structed and guided by inspiration, and that he was not limited to one kind of writing, but could vary his manner according to the demands of the subject. The Apocalypse is manifestly formed on the model of some prophetic portions of the Old Testament, and is essentially poetical. This would require a mode of treatment unsuitable for his gospel and epistles, and we need not be surprised at the dissimilarity between them.

Returning to Ephesus from his exile, John continued his active superintendence over the churches in that vicinity. 2 John 12; 3 John 10, 14. The ambition and insubordination of Diotrephes, who aimed at preëminence in the church, aroused the native vehemence of the venerable saint, and his censures exhibit a severity which at first view might excite our surprise. But his own early experience had taught him how baleful is the desire to be "greatest in the kingdom of heaven"—how detrimental to personal piety, and inconsistent with Christian humility—what heart-burnings and envy it excites, and he would give it no quarter, even if in censuring another he should reflect on himself when less controlled by the love that "seeketh not her own."

John had now reached a period of life when nature demands rest, and "the care of all the churches" would seem enough to overtax his

vigor. But his crowning work was yet to be done. He had garnered up among the choicest of his treasures, the words of truth and love which had fallen from the lips of Him who "spake as never man spake." They had been "spirit and life" to his own soul, moulding his character into the likeness of his Master. These sweet and heavenly truths which would almost seem as if whispered into the ear of "the beloved disciple" while reclining on the bosom of Jesus, he now sets himself to record as a precious legacy to the church. He was better qualified for such a work than he would have been at an earlier day. The import of some of these teachings, which at first he understood imperfectly, had been gradually unfolded in his Christian experience. Some, which his Jewish education and prejudices led him originally to misapply, the progress of time and the dissolution of the Hebrew commonwealth had set in their true spiritual light. Some, which had faded from his mind because he did not apprehend their meaning, "the Spirit of truth" recalled to his remembrance. Some, which once seemed abstractions of small practical value, his riper experience had shown to be instinct with life and peace.

The gospel of John was probably written at Ephesus. Happy for the world, that the apostle did not sooner set himself to the task of recording

the life of his Master, or, when hoary with age, did not shrink from the labor involved in its accomplishment. True, there were three biographies of Jesus Christ already prepared for the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But take the gospel of John from the sacred volume, and though the gospels of Matthew and Mark and Luke were left, the light of revelation would suffer a sad eclipse. The Sun of righteousness would still beam in the moral heavens—the Messiah would still be shown to have come as predicted; but the fullest and most attractive delineations of the *man* Christ Jesus would be wanting—his loveliness, his sympathy for our race, his sublime revealings drawn from “the bosom of the Father,” would be shaded, and *God in human flesh* be veiled in deeper obscurity. The other evangelists direct their chief attention to the miracles of Jesus—to the facts which prove his Messiahship. John relates his sentiments and discourses, and on this account the gospel of John has been expressively termed, “*The heart of Christ.*” No other writer of the New Testament has exhibited the divine nature of our Lord with so much distinctness as John. It is this which specially marks his gospel. The nearest approach to a similar exhibition is in the later writings of Paul. His epistle to the church at Colosse, which must have been familiar to John,

advances the same views, though perhaps with less distinctness. Whether this coincidence results from any connection between the two apostles—whether both exhibited this doctrine to counteract a tendency to error in the churches of which they were successively overseers—or whether the time had come when the Spirit of truth saw that the world was prepared for a clearer revelation of this doctrine, which it could not earlier “bear,” John 16:12—we are not to know in this life.

That the divine nature of Christ should be exhibited with special distinctness in the gospel of John, we need not wonder. It is a principle of the Bible that “to him who hath shall be given.” Among the disciples he was preëminently loved by the Saviour, and doubtless most loved the Saviour in return. If the mind of any one on earth was fitted to receive and transmit to the world impressions of this sublime truth, it was that of John. Before he wrote the gospel, he had seen the glory of Christ “in the holy mount,” and probably the overpowering manifestation of his divine nature in the isle of Patmos. With what emphasis, then, might he affirm, “The Word was made flesh, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.” And whom, if not the only man that in the face of a nation’s contempt and hate had dared, at the foot of his cross, to manifest

the faith of a Christian, the fidelity of a friend, should the exalted Son of God honor with special manifestations of his highest nature?

We must not suppose it was to correct the statements of the other evangelists, nor merely to supply their deficiencies, that John gave the world a new biography of the Saviour. Nor need we suppose that he undertook the work in order to confute any particular errors which were then creeping into the church. Doubtless his gospel bears a form somewhat different from what it would have done, if no false doctrines had been broached in the region where he resided. The object of the apostle was more general and practical than exposing particular heresies of the country and age in which he lived. It was, as he tells us, that others might believe in the Messiahship and divine nature of Jesus Christ, and enjoy eternal life "in his name." John 20 : 31. His gospel sprung from the overflowings of love ; it bears the gentle aspect of benevolence, not the sharp and angry look of controversy. The truths which he records were too precious to be confined within his own bosom, and under the guidance and prompting of the Spirit he wrote because he could not help it.

At the lowest estimate, John must now have reached the age of seventy to eighty years, while others regard him as still farther advanced in life.

In either case, never since time began was there a more striking instance of the refreshing, sustaining influence of religion on the human powers, or a happier illustration of the sentiment, "They shall bring forth fruit in old age."

The three epistles of John were written at a still later day. Encompassed with the infirmities of age, he lived yet longer on earth to bless the churches by his counsels, prayers, and example. According to tradition, when too feeble to walk to the meetings of his Christian brethren, he suffered himself to be carried in by his disciples. "Being unable to speak much, he repeated continually the words, 'Little children, love one another.' And when he was asked why he always repeated these words alone, he replied, 'Because such is the commandment of the Lord, and because it is sufficient if this is done.'"

A remarkable characteristic of the writings of John is their individuality. "They are replete with traits of character." They everywhere show the peculiar qualities of his mind and heart. While he describes scenes at which he was present, or exhibits doctrines taught by his Master with which his whole soul was imbued, his sensibilities glow through the drapery of language. When the thoughts are his own, they are his portrait; when the sentiments are those of Jesus, the ex-

pressions reflect the image of John. There is no attentive reader of his gospel, it has been said, "who does not receive the impression that there is a spirit breathing in it which is not found in any human book."

Descriptions of incidents and conversations occurring half a century before the gospel was written, are minute and vivid as if taken on the spot. They place us at once in the midst of the scenes described, and enlist our sympathies with those of the principal actors.

At the age doubtless of more than ninety, the venerable apostle died at Ephesus, during the reign of the emperor Trajan, and took possession of the throne and the palace long waiting for his occupancy in heaven. The vision of Patmos was become to him a glorious reality, the full joy of seeing the face of the Lamb an unfading inheritance.

LIFE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—CHILDHOOD OF PAUL.

THE designs of Providence in reference to the reign of the Messiah, had been maturing in many nations and for long centuries before the Christian era. Judea was not the only seat of these operations, nor the chosen people the only instruments employed in the work. From the sacred narrative, we know more respecting the preparation in the Holy Land for ushering Christianity into the world, than we know respecting the preparations for this purpose among the heathen ; but the latter were as real, if not as surprising, as the former. Not Jewish prophets and priests only were operating to beat down the hills and exalt the valleys before the approaching King of heaven : gentile conquerors, and gentile philosophers, and gentile poets and artists bore a part in this work. The poets and philosophers, the painters and sculptors

of ancient Greece, while cultivating its literature and perfecting its arts, thought as little as the haughty Assyrian that they were the instruments of Jehovah. As little thought they that their poetry and history, their statues and paintings, wrought with inimitable skill for the honor of them who were no gods, were enlisting Grecian culture in the service of the promised Messiah—were fabricating a language in which the doctrines of the cross could be expressed, and giving to this language such a range and influence that by its means these doctrines could be proclaimed throughout the civilized world. No more thought the proud Roman warrior, as he carried his country's eagles triumphant through remote regions, or the sturdy Roman statesman, when devising institutions and systems of government which consolidated the nations, that they were binding together people of different races and tongues in the double bonds of physical and political power, to secure the unobstructed progress of the heralds of salvation through the blood of Christ.

Jehovah was as truly the God of the Gentile as of the Jew, notwithstanding he smiled on the one and seemed to overlook the other. Nor was the instrumentality of the former, stupendous as it often was, and apparently employed only in establishing the empire of the "prince of this world,"

any more left out of the designs of Providence in reference to the church, than the grand and superhuman force sometimes exerted by the latter. The restless activity of the Greeks which led to trade and colonization, thus forming points where Jewish emigrants might gather, where proselytes to their religion might be made, and the synagogue in after-time throw open its doors for the proclamation of the gospel, was not accidental, but an endowment for the furtherance of truth and holiness from Him who knew the end at the beginning. The pride of the Romans, their love of power and conquest, their almost unrivalled enterprise, which, among other vast undertakings, originated roads diverging from the gilt pillar in the metropolis to the distant parts of their empire, were all embraced in the comprehensive plan of Providence to diffuse the gospel everywhere, and reduce the whole world, "in the fulness of time," to the sway of Immanuel.

That time was now about to dawn. The boundaries of the church were no longer confined within the limits of Judea. The Samaritans had been admitted within its pale. Cornelius and a few of his soldiers had already become, or were about to become, members of the Christian community. The barrier of Mosaic institutions and deep-rooted prejudices, closing in the Jews from the rest of the

nations, must soon yield to the powerful pressure of the principles and spirit of the gospel. Jew and Gentile must shortly be fused into one common faith and fellowship. The heavenly vision, about the time of which we are speaking, flashed this truth through the mists and clouds that enveloped the mind of Peter ; but he seems not yet to have been enough freed from the bonds of education and preconceived opinions to bear, without hesitancy, so rich a blessing to the despised millions of heathenism. Some other instrumentality specially qualified for the service was demanded and waited for by this reformation—a reformation such as the world had not witnessed since the call of Abraham, of which it was the true fulfilment, the highest, the perfect development. A reformer was needed equal to the difficulties of the task—difficulties on the side of the Jews and on the side of the Gentiles—requiring fortitude and strong faith, practical talent and logical acuteness, a deep insight into the human heart, and an acquaintance with the learning of the schools ; zeal ready to sacrifice every thing for the cause of Christ, with prudence and moderation that would disarm prejudice itself ; and love, which, yearning for the conversion of the chosen people, would clasp the heathen in its hearty embrace. Providence, which created the need, made provision for the exigence

in the great apostle of the Gentiles, of whose character and labors we now attempt a brief sketch.

Saul, "also called Paul," was a native of Cilicia, a province of Asia Minor, on the north-eastern borders of the Mediterranean. It is hemmed in between that sea and the lofty range of mount Taurus with several of its branches. These mountains are precipitous ; but a pass, called the Cilician gates, leads through them into Asia Minor on the north, and another, called the Syrian gates, leads eastward into the valley of the Orontes. Cilicia was divided into two parts, the western of which was called Rough Cilicia, the eastern, Flat or Level Cilicia. The northern part of Rough Cilicia was the haunt of robbers, who found many strong-holds among its craggy cliffs. It furnished an inexhaustible supply of cedars and firs for ship-building, and was noted for a species of goat which supplied materials for the manufacture of cloaks and tents. The southern part was occupied by pirates, who, issuing from its small sequestered harbors, extended their plundering excursions over the Mediterranean. They were actively engaged in the slave-trade, for which traffic they found encouragement among the opulent citizens of Rome. They became at length so troublesome and formidable, that the Romans, about half a century before the birth of Saul, sent a strong expedition against

them under Pompey, who burnt a vast number of their vessels, and put an end to their ravages. Eastern or Flat Cilicia is a well-watered extensive plain, famous in ancient times for its fertility, and still attracting the notice of travellers by the luxuriance of its vegetation. Cilicia once formed a part of the Greck-Syrian empire, but had become a Roman province before the Christian era. The battle of Issus between the forces of Darius and Alexander, which decided the fate of the Persian empire, took place on its eastern border. From its locality and "peculiar configuration," Cilicia was the natural road for caravans and military expeditions between Asia Minor and Syria.

Tarsus, the birthplace of Saul, was about three hundred miles by sea and four hundred by land northward of Jerusalem. It was situated on both sides of the river Cydnus, which is two hundred feet wide, and at that time was navigable for large ships of war. Having its source among the snows of mount Taurus, the Cydnus flows rapidly and its waters are extremely cold. From bathing in this river, when overheated, Alexander came near losing his life; and in a later age, its waters proved fatal to the emperor Frederick Barbarossa. Tarsus had long been a distinguished city. Under the Persian sway, it was the capital of Cilicia and the residence of the tributary kings. It continued to flourish

under the successors of Alexander, and still more under the government of the Romans. It espoused the cause of Julius Cæsar, who made it a free city, and exempted the citizens from tribute ; which privileges were confirmed by Augustus. "Its main character was that of a Greek city, where the Greek language was spoken, and Greek literature was studiously cultivated." In its schools and learned men, it rivalled Athens and Alexandria. It was not an empty boast of the apostle, that he was "a citizen of no mean city."

The place of our nativity has no small influence on our character and course in life. It was not without significance, that He who fixes the boundaries of nations in accordance with the part which they are to perform, assigned Tarsus as the birth-place of one who was destined to effect changes in the moral world, second only to those wrought by Christ himself. In Tarsus, Saul could become familiar with the Greek language. As this city was a gathering point for people from all the surrounding countries, he could here become acquainted with the religion, customs, habits, feelings, and modes of thought among the heathen. His Hebrew extraction would exclude him, during his early years, from free communication with the native inhabitants of Tarsus, and those who for various purposes resorted thither. But he could

not fail, even by an imperfect intercourse; to learn much that would be of essential service in accomplishing the great work of his subsequent life; and the characteristic antipathy of his countrymen against the heathen would be mollified by spending his younger days in their neighborhood. At this period, "the political state of the inhabitants of Cilicia was that of subjects to a Roman governor; and Roman officials, if not Roman soldiers, would be a familiar sight" to him as in boyhood he trode the streets of Tarsus.*

The exact year of Saul's birth is unknown. Some place it in the second year of our era. It must have been in the later years of Herod the Great, or in the earlier of Archelaus. He was "a young man" at the martyrdom of Stephen, probably three or four years subsequent to the death of Christ. But as he was shortly after intrusted with an important commission, Acts 9:1, 2, and the term "young man" was of indefinite usage, he may have now been thirty or more years old.

Saul was by birth a Jew, "the son of a Phari-

* See Life and Epistles of St. Paul, by Rev. Messrs. Conybeare and Howson, vol. 1, p. 24. To this admirable and elaborate work we shall be greatly indebted in the progress of our sketch of Paul, as all must be who hereafter write on the topics they have so thoroughly investigated. The particular references, in a volume like ours, need not be specified.

see," and trained after the manner of the straitest of that sect. Hebrew settlements and synagogues had been formed at this time in most of the large cities of Asia Minor, in Greece, and other parts of Europe farther west. At these points, the first heralds of the gospel in heathen lands would take their station. Saul's mission as apostle of the Gentiles demanded, therefore, that he should thoroughly understand the peculiarities of the Jewish mind and heart, as well as their modes of interpreting the Scriptures. It was no less auxiliary to his future usefulness that he was born and nurtured in a Hebrew family than in a gentile city. In the bosom of such a family only could he learn the strength of Jewish attachment to the institutions of Moses, their reliance on outward rites for procuring the divine favor. He must be "a Hebrew of the Hebrews" by education as well as birth, that he might know how vain are all legal observances for pacifying the clamors of an awakened conscience—how insufficient all the strivings of a self-righteous spirit to meet the demands of a holy law.

It was common among the Jews to give their children names expressive of religious feelings. The name Saul denotes "asked for." Some have inferred from this that Saul of Tarsus "was the first-born son of his parents, who had long desired

and asked for such a favor from God," and that he may have been, like Samuel, devoted to the special service of the Giver. In that case, they would spare no pains in early training him for such a service.

At what time the ancestors of Saul migrated to Tarsus, and whether they belonged to the Hebrews of the eastern dispersion, or to the Jews of Palestine, is not known. From the manner in which he mentions them, it appears that they were not Jewish proselytes from heathenism, but pure Hebrews from the beginning. Not improbably some of his family connections resided in Palestine, as his "sister's son" was in Jerusalem when Paul was detained temporarily in the tower of Antonia. Acts 23 : 16, 10. This may have had some influence on his being sent to that city to finish his education in the school of Gamaliel.

How far Saul was initiated into Greek literature in the schools at Tarsus, is only a matter of conjecture. The strictness of his Jewish education might prevent his mingling with heathen pupils and being exposed to the influence of gentile instruction. He expressed himself readily in Greek, and his quotations from the Old Testament are chiefly from the Septuagint. But an acquaintance with Greek does not show that he was taught in the heathen schools, for it could scarcely fail to be

gained by living in a city where Greek was the common language of the people. The Jews of Tarsus would use Greek as a medium of intercourse in business, but their strong attachment to their own country would lead them often to employ the vernacular Hebrew of Palestine among themselves. Saul could not have been a stranger in childhood to this language, for the use of which he would at a later day have frequent occasion. But though he may not have studied in the literary or philosophical schools of Tarsus, his residence in such a city would exert a powerful influence in "sharpening his faculties, refining his taste, and enlarging the circle of his sympathies and affections." To his birth and early abode in Tarsus, it has been said, "may be traced the urbanity which the apostle at no time laid aside, and of which he was frequently a perfect model."

It seems probable from what he tells us of his father, and the results of his own training, that Saul was brought up in the retirement of a Hebrew family, and instructed in childhood chiefly, if not entirely, in the mode usual with that people. He would be thoroughly taught the sacred history of his nation, as Moses commanded in the sixth and eleventh chapters of Deuteronomy, and "the traditions of the elders," to which the Pharisees attached so much importance, would by repetition

and paternal influence be deeply impressed on his heart. At this early age and by this process of training, the seeds of that self-righteous spirit which he afterwards found it so difficult to eradicate were sown broadcast in his mind and germinated under the approving smiles of a strict, magnified, but conscientious father. Who could anticipate that from this secluded domestic seminary, whose prevailing spirit was Judaism, where Pharisaic formality ruled not only with undisputed, but with welcome sway, would come forth a sturdy opponent prepared by their joint culture to detect their assailable points and undermine their strongest foundations? Did that father's heart rejoice, or bleed from anguish, when it was told in the streets of Tarsus that Saul had avowed the crucified Nazarene as the "hope of Israel" and identified himself with his cause?

The Jews of Babylon and Mesopotamia, of Syria and Palestine, spoke kindred dialects of the Aramaic, or Syrian Hebrew. They were called Aramaean Jews, and used the Hebrew Scriptures, interpreting them through the medium of the Chaldean paraphrases. The Jews dispersed in countries where the Greek was spoken, "were commonly called Hellenists, or Jews of the Grecian speech." They used the Septuagint translation of the Bible. Between these two sections of the Hebrew race,

there was not only a diversity of language, but of religious views and opinions, and they regarded each other with mutual dislike. The learned men among the Hellenists endeavored to "accommodate Jewish doctrines to the minds of the Greeks, and to make the Greek language express the mind of the Jews." This was obnoxious to the strict Hebrews of the Aramean party, who had a strong repugnance to the Greek language and literature. It was a saying among them, "Cursed be he that teacheth his son the learning of the Greeks."

The emphatic manner in which Paul speaks of his family shows that, though residing in a Grecian city and speaking the Greek language, they had not adopted Greek opinions or habits, but like the Aramean Jews clung to the institutions of Moses with unyielding tenacity. This we might not have expected, when his work, so far as pertains to his own countrymen, was to be chiefly among the Hellenists of western Asia and Europe. It was not, however, an accidental condition, but arranged by a wise Providence. From this stand-point he could best repel the calumnies of his enemies and their assaults through him on the gospel of Christ. Did unbelieving Jews accuse him of embracing Christianity through indifference to the religion of Moses; or did Judaizing Christians suggest that he entertained lax notions respecting the gospel from

the early influence of Grecian culture on his mind, he could answer, "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I." "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee;" "taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers." By descent, by Jewish rites, by education, even by party attachments, I have been all that the selectest, the strictest, the most zealous of my race can aspire to be.

Alexandria was the central point of the Hellenists. It abounded in Jews. Had Paul been born here, even though trained as he was at Tarsus after the strictest manner of the Hebrews, he might have had to contend through all his apostleship with the prejudices which such a birthplace would excite among the Jews of Palestine, the mass of whom were included in the Aramean party.

We view with deep interest every thing, however trivial in itself, which discloses the private relations of historical personages whose character, achievements, or sufferings, we admire. In the present case, the Bible, as usual, enlightens us on this point only by incidental allusions. We thus learn from it that the remote ancestors of Saul were, as already stated, Hebrews uncontaminated with the blood or the opinions of the heathen;

serving God in the Jewish manner, and adhering to the institutions of their country; that his father was a Pharisee, a rigid observer of the traditions ingrafted on the Mosaic law, both by precept and example early imbuing the mind of his son with a belief of the doctrines and a love of the forms so strictly inculcated by this sect. But of his mother it tells us nothing. We are left to conjecture whether his infancy was spent under her watchful care, his childish disappointments forgotten in her gentle soothings, his throbbing brow calmed under the soft pressure of her hand, his waywardness banished by the look which indicated more of grief than of anger. And when in buoyant youth he left his home to seek among strangers the knowledge which Tarsus with all its culture could not furnish, we know not whether to the lone mother that home was overcast with shadows, or she had long dwelt in the deeper darkness of the grave. Perhaps she did not survive to feel the bitterness of a Jewish mother's sorrow, or the fiery glow of a Jewish mother's indignation, at the apostasy of her son from the faith of his fathers. And we are not forbidden to imagine that by the hand of the son whom she had regarded as "lost," she was herself led into the way of salvation. Providence may have reserved a joy like this for the consolation of one whose heart was burdened with "great heavi-

ness" on account of the unbelief of his countrymen. And though they who are called his kinsmen, Rom. 16 : 7, 11, 21, were probably not his relatives, but only Christians of Hebrew descent, there seems to be ground for the belief that his "sister's son," who so promptly interfered to rescue him from imminent danger, Acts 23 : 16, was a follower of Jesus. Had he been a disbeliever in his Messiahship, Jewish bigotry and religious hate would probably have been stronger than the ties of such a relationship.

We have no certain means of knowing the position which the family of Saul held in social life. He was a Roman citizen by birth, but whether this "freedom" was obtained for "a great sum" by his father or remote ancestors, or was conferred as a reward for services rendered the government or some distinguished individual in the civil wars, is unknown. Tarsus as a "free" city had the privilege of being governed by its own magistrates, and was exempted from the occupation of a Roman garrison; but its inhabitants were not on that account citizens of Rome. As this right of citizenship does not prove that the family of Saul was affluent and elevated, so his manual trade does not show that his circumstances were depressed and mean. All boys among the Jews were accustomed to learn a trade. Their maxim was, "He that

teacheth not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief." What kind of trade Saul was taught in boyhood, has been the subject of no small discussion among critics; but most agree with the common English translation, in regarding it as that of a "tent-maker." The goats of his native province, as already stated, furnished abundant materials for the hair-cloth used in the construction of tents. While Peter and John were weaving their nets and plying their craft on the sea of Galilee, little dreaming how soon they were to become "fishers of men;" the young Cilician may have been alternately transforming the rough hair-cloth into tents, and storing up rabbinical lore, anticipating as little his vocation to be a master-workman in fabricating the spiritual tabernacle where Jew and Gentile would worship in common the Lord of the whole earth.

CHAPTER II.

PAUL WITH GAMALIEL.

AN ardent mind like Saul's would soon develope its powers—the boy give promise of what might be expected in the man. He had now acquired all the knowledge that the family and the school in some room of the synagogue could furnish, or that he could gain from the reading of the law in the public worship, and the discussions of learned doctors. At the last of these, children among the Jews were permitted to be present, and even to ask and answer questions. The course of life which his parents seem to have early marked out for him, now required that he should seek for higher instruction at Jerusalem. Nowhere else could he be so well fitted for a teacher of the law as in the famous school of Gamaliel. He was now probably from ten to thirteen years old. His defence before king Agrippa implies that he came from Tarsus at an early age. "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning." Acts 26:4, 5. Some, however, think he was not sent to study the law under Gamaliel, until after he had "run

through the whole circle of the sciences, and laid sure the foundations of human learning at Tarsus."

Only one whose longing for knowledge has, from the opening of life, outstripped every other desire, can understand or sympathize with the feelings of Saul in preparing to start on his distant journey. If home, relatives, friendships, were all overshadowed and forgotten in the joy of reaching the goal from which the gaze of the young enthusiast never wandered, we could not find it in our heart to censure him harshly. The religious element would give intensity to the literary ardor glowing in his bosom. Jerusalem was the central point of devotional feeling to the strict Jews in a foreign land, and few among them would hesitate to invoke the curse, "If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her cunning." Their true home was the holy city; all other homes were only resting-places on their pilgrimage.

A rigid Pharisee like Saul's father could scarcely fail sometimes to join the mirthful bands that came down through the Cilician gates from the interior of Asia Minor on their way to the great-festivals. Saul was probably too young as yet to accompany his friends at such times, but the description of these scenes would kindle his imagination and awake the earnest desire to join the multitudes that kept holy day in the city of David. It was

probably on one of these occasions that he left his home to take up his abode in Jerusalem. Whether the company went by land, passing through the defiles of mount Amanus to Antioch, and thence along the coast-road through Tyre and Sidon to Judea; or sailed directly from Tarsus to Cesarea, they would, in either case, as was customary in going to the feasts, perform the latter part of the journey on foot, with the voice of song and instrumental music.

Gamaliel, who now became Saul's teacher, was brought before our notice in the life of John. He was the grandson of Hillel, the founder of the famous rabbinical school of that name, in which the honor of tradition was upheld as superior even to the law. Gamaliel was a leader of the Pharisees, a member, if not president of the Sanhedrim, and one of the seven most distinguished teachers of the Hebrew nation. The Jews have a saying that since his death "the glory of the law hath ceased." He was candid and wise, casting off many of the prejudices of his party. He allowed his zealous pupil Saul to pursue the study of Greek literature, although "by the Jewish Palestine laws, after the Maccabean wars, even the Greek language was prohibited to be taught to the Hebrew youth." From his interfering to shield Peter and John against the wrath of the Sadducees, some have in-

ferred that he was a secret adherent of the gospel, and that he remained a member of the Sanhedrim for the purpose of acting with more effect in promoting the interests of the new sect ; but his continued connection with the Jewish schools of theology, and the great respect in which he was held by his countrymen, show that they did not suspect him of leaning towards Christianity. Up to that time, too, the apostles had been strict observers of the law ; so that on the occasion referred to, Gamaliel acted rather in the character of an enlightened judge, than in the spirit of an excited religious-partisan.

The Jewish synagogues often had two apartments, one for prayer and the offices of public worship, the other, as a place where wise and learned men might meet, after divine worship and prayer were over, to discuss matters relating to religion which required more research. At these meetings, some passage was taken from the Old Testament, or some topic for discussion proposed, and made the subject of comment. "Various interpretations were given, aphorisms were propounded, allegories suggested, and the opinions of ancient doctors quoted and discussed." These meetings were public ; any one, though not a member, being allowed to ask questions. Young men came hither to listen, or to take part themselves in the discussions.

There were apartments for such purposes within the courts of the temple, in one of which it doubtless was that the parents of Jesus found him in his childhood among the learned doctors, "hearing them and asking them questions." There were numerous synagogues in Jerusalem—rabbinical writers say, 480. A part of these were for foreign Jews, both Aramean and Hellenistic. Among the latter, Luke specifies, Acts 6:9, "the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and them of Asia and Cilicia." We may suppose Saul while a pupil of Gamaliel would often be found at these, especially the latter, both to listen and take part in the discussions.

Instruction in the theological schools of the Jews was at this time chiefly confined to the Scriptures. Josephus says his countrymen regarded that man as wise, who was fully acquainted with the laws and "able to interpret their meaning." The instruction was mostly oral, the teacher sitting on a raised platform, or on the ground, with his scholars around him on low seats or on the floor. "It was a peculiarity of the Jewish schools that the pupils were encouraged to catechize the teacher. Contradictory opinions were expressed with the utmost freedom." Such a process would accustom the pupils to logical reasoning, rapid thought, and ready and concise expression. It would make them

familiar with the words of Scripture in the original, and form a habit of self-command which neither the presence of governors and kings, nor the tumult and threats of a mob, could discompose.

The eager, ambitious youth from Tarsus would sit reverent "at the feet of Gamaliel," listening to his words of wisdom; and the master, in return, would delight in transferring to the mind of the favorite pupil the accumulated treasures that enriched his own. Which was the happier in this fellowship, the teacher who imparted, or the pupil whose keen discriminating intellect grasped and stored up these treasures, it were hard to decide. Under the guidance of his experienced instructor, Saul devoted day after day to the study of the Old Testament, and the rabbinical modes of interpreting it, with the traditions of the fathers. He daily became more strict in observing the requirements of the law, and not only seemed to others but to himself "blameless" when tried by its standard. Moral and conscientious, his legal self-righteous spirit waxed stronger from intimacy with the doctors of his sect, who were honored for their sanctity; and he thought himself lacking in nothing which became one foremost among students of the law, who were called "the holy people." His enthusiasm for "Judaism" was kindled by daily contact with its most zealous advocates, until, in this

respect, he surpassed not only his fellow-pupils, but even his renowned teacher. Gamaliel's zeal for the law seems the product of education, position, and principle. It was moderated by mental constitution and age, and kept under control by experience in human affairs. The zeal of Saul was sincere, earnest, the offspring of conviction. It found fuel in his ardent temperament, and was unchecked by the maxims of prudence or the suggestions of selfishness. It became at length an irrepressible flame in his bosom, and he longed for some fit opportunity to display it in action.

His course in life was now laid. He would be a leader among the Pharisees—the first among the Rabbis—perhaps the successor of his venerated teacher, whose honors, he might say with another, “would not let him sleep.” The patronage of Gamaliel, the applauses of his companions, the favor of the wise whose acquaintance he had gained by his ripe scholarship, all conspired to assure him that these brilliant distinctions were within his reach. He had confidence in himself—in the strength and comprehension of his intellect—in the extent of his mental acquisitions—the purity and perfection of his obedience to the law. Experience had not cooled the ardor of youth, and taught him that “the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.”

How often does history prove the truth of the maxim, "Man proposes, but God disposes." If, when contributing so largely to equip a soldier of the cross and an apostle of the Gentiles, Gamaliel had been aware of the effect of what he was doing, how irksome would have been his task; and how hateful would progress in knowledge have been to Saul himself, if he could have foreseen what use he was to make of it. Providence wisely conceals its designs from the human eye until they are realized in execution.

CHAPTER III.

PAUL A PERSECUTOR.

"AND the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." The last chapter left the subject of our memoir a pupil in the school of Gamaliel. Several years, we know not how many, have intervened, and he is now presented to our notice in the bloody garments of a persecutor, taking charge of the raiment which the witnesses, who falsely swore away the life of an eminently holy man, threw off, in order, according to Jewish custom, to cast the first stone at their victim. Saul must now have been twenty-five or thirty years old. Where he had been or how employed since finishing his literary course with Gamaliel, we have no information. If he resided at Jerusalem, it is probable he would have met with Jesus at the feasts. In that case, we should scarcely fail to find an intimation of such an occurrence in some of his numerous epistles. If he returned to Tarsus, and was occupied in pursuing his studies in the Greek literary and philosophical schools of that city, still, he must have known by visits or through commercial intercourse what was passing in Judea. The crucifixion and

alleged resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, and the formation of a sect claiming that he was the Messiah, would not escape his notice, though at such a distance he would regard these occurrences with less interest than if he was living and acting among his old associates in the holy city.

But wherever he had been, and however engaged, we now find him again at Jerusalem, the same rigid Pharisee, the same eager disputant, the same fervid devotee of Judaism; or not the same only because these distinctive traits were more fully developed. The interval had doubtless been years of fastings and legal observances—of religious craving for peace, unsatisfied—of willing to do good, still overborne by the presence of evil—of struggles to escape from the bondage of sin, only to feel more keenly its galling fetters—of desperate conflicts between reason and appetite, which none knew better than Paul to paint from his own experience. But the peace, the joy, the freedom from the stirrings of depravity which he had not yet attained, he trusted to reach by severer mortifications of the flesh and self-relinquishment of sensual pleasures. In this state of feeling, when he came in contact with the new sect, their quiet serenity in the daily duties and trials of life—the peace, “passing all understanding,” which “filled their hearts and minds” and often radiated from their countenances.

ces—would seem to cast reproach on the few stinted comforts that Judaism bestowed on his austerities. An occasion only was wanting to call forth in open violence the conflicting passions that harbored in his breast. Nor was it late in occurring.

So long as the apostles strictly observed the ceremonial law, and abstained from controverting the peculiar principles of the Pharisees, the latter did not attempt by force to prevent them from making converts to what was probably regarded as only another sect of Judaism, whose distinguishing tenet was a belief in Jesus of Nazareth as the true Messiah. But "the appointment of the gospel as a distinct means of forming all nations for the kingdom of God," would soon begin to be perceived. The real nature of Christianity as not only a religion of a new spirit, but requiring a new form, would gradually unfold itself. The first to discover its true relation to Judaism seems to have been the martyr Stephen; at least, he is the first whom history brings to our notice. He was one of the seven whom the church at Jerusalem, on the complaint of the Hellenists that "their widows were neglected in the daily ministration," chose to distribute the funds contributed for the poor members. Whether there had been any undue partiality in the distribution, or whether the old jealousy between the Aramean and Hellenist

Jews had magnified a casual omission into a designed neglect, the dissatisfaction issued in "the furtherance of the gospel." The seven had Greek names. A part of them—some think the whole—were Hellenists. If not a foreign Jew, in discharging the duties of his office, Stephen would be brought into familiar acquaintance with gentile proselytes. This may have turned his special attention to the relation which Christianity bears to heathenism, and consequently to Judaism. His opposers seem to have been less indignant at his claim that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, than at his intimating that under the new dispensation the Jew and the Gentile would be on the same level—that the time was coming when not in the temple only, or in any one sacred spot, the true worshippers would "worship the Father." This touched their national pride as well as their religious sensibilities. They distorted his doctrine into a charge that he had spoken against the temple and the law. Stephen was a forerunner of Paul; his teaching contained the elements which Paul arranged into system, and exhibited with more prominence and completeness. He bears to the apostle of the Gentiles much the same relation which John Huss bears to the great German Reformer. Less entangled in Jewish prejudices and nationality than his countrymen trained in Pales-

tine, the mind of Stephen would more readily open to such views of Christianity.

"Full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," he not only managed wisely the funds of the church, but with great power and success discussed the claims of the gospel with the unbelieving Jews, especially with the Hellenists. It is not improbable that in their synagogues he came in conflict with the former pupil of Gamaliel. When the highly gifted and logical Saul was no more able than the rest to "resist the wisdom and the spirit with which he spoke," we may do no injustice in supposing that the mortification of defeat conspired with intense zeal to crush an opponent by force, who could not be put down by argument. They dragged him before the Sanhedrim, suborned witnesses to secure his condemnation, and breaking in upon his noble exhibition and defence of his principles, hurried him out of the city and stoned him to death. However the misguided zeal of Saul urged him on to sanction, or even rejoice in the murder of the first martyr which Judaism exacted of Christianity, we would fain believe that he was not a partner in the subornation of the witnesses. But who shall set bounds to a perverted conscience, which can coolly commit and even glory in deeds which might inspire horror and loathing in realms consecrated to evil?

"Devout men carried Stephen to his burial," and the martyr rested in peace; while his fellow-deacons, who would be specially exposed to a similar fate, with many others of the church, were scattered abroad "everywhere preaching the word." Some of them, Hellenists "of Cyprus and Cyrene," Acts 11:20, found their way to Antioch in Syria, where, carrying out the principles of Stephen, they preached to the Gentiles, and organized a church independent of Judaism. Others went to Damascus, where was a large Jewish population, the converts among which they formed into a church.

If, as has been said, one cannot forget the first man he has killed on the field of battle, much less can he forget the first victim to his religious fanaticism. Blinded as Saul was by prejudice and zeal, the scene through which he had just passed would leave impressions on his mind not easily erased. If love of place or power, if ambition or revenge had been his impelling passion, his ruling motive, he might not have been more cruel or unrelenting, though his conscience might have been more seared, and his case more hopeless. But he was honest in his convictions, and verily thought he was all the while "doing God service." It was this, as he intimates in one of his epistles, that kept him within the reach of divine mercy, 1 Tim. 1:12, 13; and this, too, left him within the range of salutary

influences from the words and death of his victim. The similarity between his own exhibition of the gospel before his countrymen, Acts 13 : 16-23, and that of Stephen, has attracted the notice of critics. A similar train of remark he may have heard in the discussions of Stephen with the unbelieving Jews in the Hellenist synagogues.

But whatever may have been the ultimate influence of this scene on the mind of the persecutor, the constancy, the forgiving spirit, the very calmness of the martyr, as they manifestly sprung from trust in Jesus of Nazareth, would for the time only embitter his rage. He "made havoc of the church in Jerusalem," and when the work in that city had been completed, or might be finished by other hands, he solicited a commission from the high-priest to pluck up and destroy the newly formed church at Damascus. None should outstrip him in zeal for Judaism, and if necessary for effecting his purpose, none should plunge deeper in blood. Persecution seemed not now a painful task required of him by imperious duty, but his life, his daily aliment. His very breath was "threatenings and slaughter." Yet with all this, Saul, as we have said, was honest even in his highest fanaticism—an illustrious example of the falsity of the maxim, "No matter what a man believes, if he is sincere," and of the truth of man's responsibility

for his belief. He had mistaken duty, not knowingly sacrificed it to selfishness; he had acted on wrong principles, but not wilfully discarded what he had been led to believe was right.

CHAPTER IV.

PAUL'S CONVERSION.

LEAVING behind him his work of carnage in Jerusalem, and the desolate homes from which he had dragged fathers and mothers to prison, if not to death, Saul was now on his way to Damascus, to execute his fell mission in that city. We know neither the road nor the companions of his journey. The shortest route would be to him the most chosen—that which would soonest lead him to his feast of blood, the most captivating. His eye would be closed to the beauties, his ear to the harmonies of nature. Like the philanthropic Howard among the paintings and statues and architecture of Rome, he would be indifferent to all else but the object of his journey. The expanse of the distant Mediterranean would in vain court a glance from the fiery persecutor, as he crossed the hills of Samaria. Jacob's well and Sychar's sweet valley would have no power to detain his steps. Alike unheeding, he would traverse the enchanting scenery that surrounds the blue waters of Galilee, and the stony, glaring desert which stretches to the foot of Anti-Libanus. The snow-crowned head of Hermon, rising in solitary grandeur, would attract





but a meaningless look ; and Damascus itself, gleaming through its wilderness of beauties, excite only the thought that it harbored the followers of the hated Nazarene.

Saul was now near the end of his journey. It was mid-day. Should he enter at once upon the execution of his errand, or, when the sun had sunk behind Lebanon, and the glories of an oriental sky were mirrored from the thousand rivulets that murmur among the gardens of the city, steal upon his unsuspecting victims, assembled for evening worship, and at one sweep make sure of his prey?

Whatever were his plans, they were suddenly frustrated. A light above the brightness of the sun shone suddenly from heaven, prostrating both Saul and his companions on the ground, and a voice addressed him distinctly in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Overwhelmed with astonishment and terror, he cried out, "Who art thou, Lord?" The voice replied, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." He arose from the earth sightless, humbled, and ready to obey the will of Him who spoke, and was led by the hand into Damascus. The light was no illusion of the imagination, which Saul mistook for the visible presence of Jesus Christ, for it was seen by those that were with

him. It was the same light before which the apostle John fell to the ground as dead in the isle of Patmos. The voice was not the echo of guilt in the conscience of the persecutor, for it was heard by his companions, though they did not, like him, understand its meaning. "The God of our fathers," said Ananias at their first interview, "hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." Paul himself defends his apostleship on the ground that he had "seen Jesus Christ the Lord," doubtless referring to this occasion; and he more than once intimates that he was directly and miraculously called to be an apostle. His work too, his special mission to the Gentiles, was pointed out to him by his divine Master.

Judas, to whose house Saul was conducted by his companions, was doubtless one of the principal Jews at Damascus to whom he bore letters from the chief priests, Acts 9:2. Here he abode three days in deep physical and mental darkness. Among his unbelieving countrymen he might find sympathy for the loss of his eyesight, which they would doubtless regard as the effect of lightning, or some unusual natural phenomenon; but his mental sufferings, if he ventured to disclose them, would excite only ridicule for his weakness, or rage for his wavering attachment to Judaism. The conflict of his

feelings, the agony of his soul, the upbraidings of conscience, and sense of guilt, were so great that all this time he neither ate nor drank.

A vision had pointed out a disciple called Ananias as the instrument for restoring his eyesight and removing the burden that was crushing his spirit. By a similar vision, Ananias was commanded to perform the service. He was a Jew, strict in observing the law, and held in good repute by all his countrymen in Damascus. At first he shrunk from the service, saying, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints." He could scarcely believe the sanguinary persecutor was a true convert to the faith of Christ. He knew his object in coming to Damascus. Perhaps he had been informed by letters from the church at Jerusalem, or some one of the Sanhedrim friendly to the gospel had warned the Christians at Damascus of their danger. But when satisfied of Saul's true condition, Ananias hastened to perform the grateful commission. He sought out the house of Judas, where his presence was, doubtless, as unexpected as unwelcome. Saul's intention to break up the church at Damascus was known to those with whom he was staying, and they might wonder that one of its well-known leaders should expose himself to danger by running into the lion's mouth. With what astonishment would they hear

him address Saul as a "brother;" and what would be their rage to find Saul, relieved from his blindness, returning the salutation with all the warmth of a new-born soul. The "scales" had fallen from his eyes, the burden from his conscience. With joy unutterable he professed by baptism his belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, who had plucked his "feet from the horrible pit and the miry clay."

Saul is a distinguished monument of the power of the Holy Ghost. However intense the light from heaven, or terrific the voice, they would not have wrought such a change without the special influences of the Holy Spirit. But for these, Saul might have gone darkling to the grave—a self-righteous Pharisee—a reviler of the name of Jesus—a persecutor of the saints, though the more violent the less was his power to do them harm—scoffing at the thought that there was any thing supernatural in this scene, and ashamed of his weakness in pouring forth supplications to a crucified impostor.

He is, too, a distinguished monument of divine sovereignty and grace. Of all the company, as they approached Damascus, none seemed farther than Saul from becoming a convert to Christianity. They all saw the same light, heard the same voice, but, so far as we know, all, save he who was "a chosen vessel," saw and heard without the least spiritual profit. They may have even been the

foremost in ridiculing the superstition that could see the face and hear the voice of the Son of God in what they deemed a strange natural occurrence. Paul gives us his own views of this surpassing act of grace. Near the close of his life, looking back to his early course with unfeigned grief and self-abasement, amazed that "notwithstanding all" he had been converted and put into the ministry, he finds the reason not in the need of his eminent services, but in the illustrious example it affords of the depth of the divine compassion. "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." Had the apostle foreseen how many a desponding soul would take courage from this divine lesson, he would not rejoice in the evil he had done, but he would lift a higher note of praise to the wisdom and goodness that could transform this evil into a well-spring of life.

Any striking peculiarity in one's religious experience at the period of conversion, is apt to show itself in subsequent life. If the work of the Spirit has been powerful and sudden, conviction for sin deep and agonizing, light, breaking instantaneous on the gloom, almost overwhelming—the truths which first led the subject of the change to serious con-

sideration, which deepened his convictions and bowed him in submission at the foot of the cross, will be the frequent gathering point of his thoughts, and if he is a preacher, will be reflected in his public ministrations.

We should expect so marked a conversion as that of Paul would show its influence on the type of his religious character and teachings—that his new life would be in strong contrast with his old—that his pharisaical strictness, his self-righteousness of the law, found to be worthless in giving peace to an awakened conscience, would be joyfully and for ever discarded for the “righteousness which is of God by faith.” We are not surprised to find him the apostle of salvation by grace, and of salvation to the Gentiles. The Spirit, at his conversion, stamped on his heart the doctrines which he afterwards taught, and when arranged in systematic form, they were only a development of his experience.

The exact year of Paul’s conversion is unknown, but was probably A. D. 36.

The unbelieving Jews would now regard their former favorite with loathing, and heap unmeasured abuse on his head. They would endeavor to destroy his influence by invective, perhaps ascribing, as is done in modern days, his change of parties to impetuosity, which led him from one passion to an-

other, each for the time having mastery of the soul. Never long of the same mind, they might insinuate, he would soon come back to his old sentiments, or push forward to something newer. Or they might ascribe the change to some baser motive, some disappointment of ambition, some pique of wounded pride.

Saul now consorted with the church, who would regard him with amazement, and some of them, perhaps, with suspicion and fear. It would be difficult for them, as it was for the disciples several years later at Jerusalem, Acts 9 : 26, to free themselves from the apprehension that the apparent change was only a device to accomplish more thoroughly their ruin. But Saul with characteristic promptness threw himself at once into the work of preaching that Jesus is the Messiah, "the Son of God." He entered boldly into the synagogues, and with the weapons whose use he had been taught by Gamaliel, assailed and confounded his opponents. Familiar with the rabbinical modes of interpretation, and enlightened by the Spirit to apprehend more clearly the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah and the nature of his kingdom, he reasoned with a power which they could not resist.

It would manifestly be unsafe for Saul to continue long in Damascus, as both he and the church

must expect soon to feel the wrath of the Sanhedrim, who, it might be supposed, would not be slow to dispatch another inquisitor in the place of him they would brand as an apostate. He therefore went into Arabia—whether into that part bordering on Syria and Mesopotamia, or into that bordering on Palestine and Egypt, is uncertain. That he retired, as some imagine, “to the heights of Sinai” for “contemplation and solitary communion with God,” seems in accordance neither with the natural qualities of his mind nor with common Christian experience. In the freshness of the new life, even the sluggish are prone to be active, the timid to be resolute, while the impetuous sometimes transgress the bounds of propriety, in their zeal for the cause of Christ. With his ardent temperament and unflagging energy, we should expect Saul, in the glow of first love, to “yearn” for action rather than contemplation, for the synagogue rather than “solitude.”

After remaining a while in Arabia, Saul returned to Damascus, thinking, perhaps, that opposition had now died away, and that in a city where the gentile proselytes were so numerous he might successfully pursue the work to which he had devoted his life. Here and in Arabia he continued three years, Gal. 1:18, which, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, might be one whole year and a part

of two others. The unbelieving Jews of Damascus, unable to bear his presence, or to confute the proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus which he adduced from their own scriptures, conspired to kill him. Bent on his assassination, they watched the gates of the city day and night to prevent his escape. They had by some means brought over to their side the ethnarch of Aretas, the Arabian king, who appears to have had temporary possession of Damascus. The governor, with characteristic oriental disregard of justice and human life, not only offered no resistance to their foul plot, but supplied soldiers to aid in its execution. Saul's friends discovered their design, and found means to foil it. Under cover of the darkness, they let him down in a basket from an unguarded part of the wall, "probably where some overhanging houses, as is usual in Eastern cities, opened upon the outer country." Had Saul been as eager for the honor of martyrdom as some were two or three centuries later, or had he followed the impulse of his own undaunted spirit, he would have faced the danger rather than give his enemies occasion to triumph in his flight. It has been suggested that his reckoning this occurrence among his "infirmities," many years after, 2 Cor. 11:33, may show that he felt there was "something of humiliation in the mode of his escape."

It seems almost incredible that among a people favored with "the oracles of God" such an attempt to take the life of Paul could have been made in the name and for the defence of religion. But this incident is in harmony with the Jewish opinions and practices of that age. Josephus mentions a conspiracy of ten men to slay Herod the Great for introducing foreign customs hostile to their religion and laws. They bound themselves together by an oath to perform this deed, esteeming it an act of piety. Philo, a celebrated Jewish writer contemporary with Paul, speaking of a Jew who forsakes the worship of the true God, says, "It is highly proper that all who have a zeal for virtue should have a right to punish with their own hands, without delay, those who are guilty of this crime," and that they should thus "without fear, and with all promptitude, espouse the cause of piety." Keeping this in mind, we shall cease to wonder that with the views entertained of his sentiments by the Jews, Paul should reckon among his hairbreadth escapes from danger, "perils" by his "own countrymen."

Paul entered Damascus the first time in darkness, and now he left it, for the last time so far as we know, in darkness. He turned his footsteps towards Jerusalem. We might think this would be quitting one scene of danger to rush into another.

But he had a strong desire to see Peter, Gal. 1 : 18, and he was willing to run some risk in gratifying this desire. It was not that he expected to gain any new views of the gospel from this apostle, who was older and had been longer a disciple of Christ than himself, for he had a better teacher in the Spirit of truth, Gal. 1 : 12. He might wish to inform Peter respecting the results of his labors, not only in Damascus, but among the Arabians, and to confer with him at this early day in reference to preaching the gospel, and forming churches among the Gentiles. He had been set apart for this work from the hour of his conversion, and it must ever after have been the guiding star of his life. But it was essential to his success, and to the harmony of the church, that he should act in concert with those who "were apostles" before him. Saul, too, was "not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." He was not afraid "to give a reason for the hope" that was in him, even in the presence of his old instructor Gamaliel, or in the Hellenistic synagogues where he had been known as the leading opponent of Christianity, especially that phase of it which he was now consecrated to present and defend before the world. Nor might he despair of persuading some of his old associates to embrace the truth which had so full possession of his own understanding and heart. Could former friendships but

open the way for exhibiting the gospel, they might rise above prejudice, and experience the working of the mighty power which had turned him from the paths of error and death.

Arriving in Jerusalem, he sought the society of the followers of Christ, but was met with disheartening reserve. He had escaped the dagger of the assassin only to feel the keener edge of suspicion and distrust. But Barnabas, who was a Hellenist from the island of Cyprus, and may have been acquainted with Saul, as their native places were not very remote from each other, or whose warm heart led him to inquire into the real character of the stranger, introduced him to the apostles, to whom he related in full the circumstances of his conversion and his preaching "in the name of Jesus" at Damascus. Owned as a Christian brother, he abode fifteen days with Peter, Gal. 1:18, associating with the disciples, and disputing with the Hellenists in their synagogues till they also conspired to take his life. Admonished in a trance, Acts 22:18, that his labors would be of no avail in Jerusalem, he seemed still unwilling to depart from the city, even though aware of the danger of delay. He could not bear to give up the hope that some of his companions, who had known his murderous zeal against the gospel, would be influenced by his change to join the Christian fellowship, Acts 22:19,

20. When peremptorily commanded to depart from the city in order to go among the Gentiles, attended by the brethren to whom he had become endeared from this brief intercourse, he went down to Cæsarea, and thence to Tarsus.

With what mingled emotions would Saul approach his native city, after so long an absence and changes of so deep interest. What reception would he meet from his friends, who ere this had doubtless heard of his apostasy from the faith of his fathers? Would he be welcome to the paternal home and heart, or would he be repelled with a frown of hate and words of bitterness, such as only Jewish abhorrence of the despised Nazarene could fabricate? Would a mother, a sister, shrink from his embrace as from a loathsome reptile? Or regarding the strange tale of his conversion as the hallucination of a madman, would they weep over the wreck of reason and the eclipse of his powerful intellect? But all these trying uncertainties he would eagerly hazard for an opportunity to make known at Tarsus the Messiah whose mercy he had shared and whose love was glowing in his heart.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL AT ANTIOCH—VISITS JERUSALEM.

How long Saul remained at Tarsus, or how he was employed, the history does not inform us. It was probably an interval of three or four years. But whether the time was longer or shorter, we may be sure he was not idle. Among his own relatives, in the Jewish synagogues, in excursions to preach the gospel in surrounding regions, Gal. 1:21, Acts 15:23, in extending his acquaintance with the literature and opinions of the Gentiles—which his vocation as their apostle demanded, and for which Tarsus offered peculiar facilities—he would find enough to engross all the energies of his active mind. From an incidental allusion, we may infer that his labors were not in vain. When tidings came to Jerusalem that the gospel had been preached with great success among the Gentiles at Antioch, the church delegated Barnabas to inquire into the matter. On arriving in the city and witnessing the change wrought in the converts by “the grace of God,” the good man was filled with joy. He at once entered into the work with all his heart, and under his teachings great numbers were added to the church. But he needed help.

He was doubtless aware of Saul's special designation for such a service, and not improbably knew that his labors in "the regions of Syria and Cilicia" had been successful among the heathen. Saul would, then, be just the partner the case required, and Barnabas hastened to Tarsus to find him.

Antioch, which now for several years became Saul's residence, or "point of departure and return," was situated on the river Orontes near the north-east angle of the Mediterranean, about forty-one miles from that sea by the course of the river, and sixteen by land. It was not far from the Syrian gates, a pass between mount Amanus and mount Lebanon, leading from Asia Minor into Syria. It was founded by Seleucus Nicator to be the capital of the Greek-Syrian empire, and it afterwards became the Roman metropolis of eastern Asia. It was a union of four cities, two of which were built by Seleucus, and two were added at later periods. Each had its own walls, and a common inclosure surrounded the whole. In the time of Augustus, it was regarded with Alexandria as the third in rank among the cities of the known world. It contained about one hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand inhabitants. Its situation gave it easy access to the Mediterranean and to the countries of Asia, making it a place of resort for people of all classes. It was "the eastern

centre of Greek fashion and Roman luxury," distinguished alike for its beautiful climate, its magnificent buildings, its pleasure-loving, superstitious, dissolute population. On the high ground, four or five miles south-west of the city, were the celebrated grove and temple of Daphne, where art and taste and wealth had lavished all their resources to convert one of nature's loveliest scenes into a sanctuary for vice.

The modern name of the city is Antakia. It is about three hundred miles north of Jerusalem.

Barnabas and Saul continued their joint labors at Antioch for a year, preaching to crowded assemblies. The growing number of converts attracted attention, and as they were admitted to the church without the forms of the Jewish religion, they could not be regarded as Jewish proselytes. They belonged to a new religious sect, and a new name became necessary to distinguish them. "As the term Christ," which is connected with the office of our Saviour, "was held to be a proper name, the adherents of the new religion were distinguished by a word formed from it, as the adherents of any school of philosophy were wont to be named after their teacher." In this way, "the disciples were called CHRISTIANS first in Antioch."

It has been asked, "Who gave them this appellation?" They did not assume it themselves.

They called each other, "disciples of the Lord," "disciples of Jesus," "brethren," "saints," "believers." It was not given them by the Jews. The term Christ is equivalent to Messiah; and the Jews would never distinguish by a name so revered the adherents of one they had rejected and crucified as an impostor. "Sect of the Nazarenes," Acts 24:5, expresses better their contempt and hate towards the followers of Jesus. The term without much doubt originated with the Gentiles; and if meant for derision when passing fresh-coined among the wits of a city "notorious" for invective, it would not abash one who gloried in nothing but the cross of Christ, and was not ashamed to preach his gospel in a still prouder metropolis.

The reports sent back by Barnabas respecting the progress of the gospel among the Gentiles at Antioch, would draw others from Jerusalem to visit that promising field. Certain prophets or teachers came down from the mother church, one of whom, named Agabus, "signified by the Spirit" that a "great dearth" would soon be felt throughout Judea. It took place with distressing severity in the fourth year of the reign of Claudius Cæsar. Josephus relates, that food was excessively dear in Jerusalem, and that many died from want. The sufferers received aid from various quarters. Among others, Helena, queen of Adiabene—on the Tigris,

between the Great and Little Zab, below ancient Nineveh—coming to Jerusalem and witnessing the distress, “sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of corn, and others of them to Cyprus to bring a cargo of dried figs.” Both she and her son, king Izates, who “sent great sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem,” had lately become proselytes to Judaism.

Nor were the recent converts to Christianity among the Gentiles at Antioch less mindful of what their brethren in Judea were about to suffer. When they heard the prediction of Agabus, in anticipation of its fulfilment they seem at once to have resolved, each according to his means, to send them relief. The collections were promptly made, and Barnabas and Saul were soon on their way bearing them to the holy city. The latter would be glad of an opportunity, by this act of kindness, to soften the prejudices against him still lingering in the breasts of some of the believing Jews. He would, for a time, even forego the work of preaching Christ among the Gentiles, to effect an object involving his own usefulness and the harmony of the churches. He had learned thus early the lesson he afterwards inculcated on the Christians at Rome, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” He might also hope for an

opportunity to confer farther with Peter and other apostles respecting the relation of the gospel and its institutions to the Gentiles. But at this visit to Jerusalem he seems not to have met with any of them; at least, the historian makes no mention of such an occurrence. It was about the time when Herod Agrippa persecuted the church and put James the brother of John to the sword. Acts 12 : 2.

The notice of this painful incident is interposed between their arrival and departure from the city. Probably none of the apostles remained in Jerusalem, unless Peter was then lying in prison expecting at the close of the Passover to share the fate of his old partner and friend. We may suppose Barnabas and Saul would arrange their visit so as to be present at this feast. Having accomplished their beneficent errand by delivering their gifts to the elders of the church, the messengers would hasten back to Antioch. This was about the year A. D. 45.

A young man named John and surnamed Mark accompanied them on their return. He was a native of Jerusalem, and cousin or nephew to Barnabas. His mother's name was Mary. She was a pious woman, and it was at her house many were assembled praying for Peter, who was doomed to death on the morrow, Acts 12 : 6, 12. Barnabas

may have wished to withdraw his young relative from the scene of persecution, to the dangers of which he would be specially exposed from the zeal and boldness of his mother in allowing Christian assemblies for worship in her house ; or the young man himself, catching her spirit, might desire to set forth with the apostles in order to become a missionary among the heathen. She would not grudge him to this service, and with the Spartan mother, would rather have him return a lifeless body, fallen in noble combat, than a living son flying inglorious from the field. We shall hear of the young man again in the progress of our narrative.

CHAPTER VI.

PAUL'S MISSIONARY TOUR WITH BARNABAS.

THE church in Antioch was at this time well supplied with Christian teachers. In addition to Barnabas and Saul, it enjoyed the services of "Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch." It was a light in the midst of deep, far-surrounding darkness. Fruitful as were his labors, and pleasant as the society and coöperation of so noble a band of colleagues, the spirit that afterwards would not suffer him to "build on another man's foundation," would often cause Saul to think and speak of planting the church in other heathen cities. True, there was enough to be done among the unconverted thousands both Gentiles and Jews at Antioch; but this service might be performed by others. The brethren would prize his ministry too highly to be willing to part with him, and some, less charitable than the rest, might regard him as too fond of change in wishing to leave a station where he was so useful for another where success was at best only problematical; and if the mission was to be undertaken at any rate, it might be suggested that they could better spare

some others of their teachers, than the two who had been with them so long, and to whom they were so much attached.

At length it became a subject of so general interest, that the church seem with fasting and prayer to have sought divine direction in the matter. While they were thus engaged, Acts 13 : 2, "the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'" In what manner this communication was made, we know not; but it was in a form which left no doubt on the minds of the brethren that it was from heaven. Objections were silenced, opposition ceased, and love not without a tear placed its sacrifice on the altar of duty. With fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands, Barnabas and Saul were consecrated to the service of Christ among the heathen. Amid the prayers and good wishes of their converts, the two missionaries departed from the luxurious city to bear the messages of salvation to a dying world. John Mark attended them as their assistant. How hopeless their task if they were going forth in their own name, relying on their own strength. But they were "sent forth by the Holy Ghost," and were strong in faith that they were not sent in vain.

Bending their way westward to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, at the mouth of the Orontes, they

embarked for the island of Cyprus. Whether they had selected this route after examining the advantages of the several fields presented to their choice, or the Holy Ghost had specified as well the place as the work to be done, we are not informed. Cyprus was easy of access, its mountain-tops being visible "in clear weather from the coast" near Seleucia. It was the native country of Barnabas, who must have known well its condition and the character of its inhabitants, and both he and Mark may have had friends still residing there. It is not improbable that during his long residence at Antioch, Barnabas had visited Cyprus, vessels in the summer often passing between Seleucia and Salamis. Perhaps he retired to the island "upon the persecution which arose about Stephen," and was one of those who "preached the word" there at that time. However this may be, the gospel had already found some converts among the inhabitants of Cyprus. Acts 11:20, 21.

As they left the bay of Antioch, they would see at a short distance to the south mount Casius, rising from the shore to the height of five thousand feet, while the mountains of Cyprus were visible before them in the south-west. With a fair wind, a few hours' sail would bring them to Salamis, at the eastern end of the island. It was the most important mercantile town in Cyprus, situated on

a bay of the same name, on a large plain extending far into the interior between two ranges of mountains, which intersect the island from east to west. As they entered the harbor, intent on exchanging their cargo for the wines, oil, wheat, or fruits in which the island abounded, how little knew or cared the ship's company about the moral results of that short voyage. The Jewish travellers had been unnoticed, or their quiet thoughtfulness amidst the frivolity and coarse jests of the crew had caused only a passing remark in ridicule of their preciseness.

Thus it ever is—"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." The conquests of principle are usually slow, noiseless, and unnoticed in their early progress; while those of force are rapid, full of violence and turmoil, entrancing the world. Nations shall quake with fear or be rapt in wonder at proud armaments sweeping the seas or traversing the lands with irresistible power, while a few short years shall leave no trace of their existence but on the historic page. A solitary ship bears a herald of the cross to a distant shore, unnoticed and unknown save by a few friends of the Redeemer; but in coming centuries the fruits of his labors "shall shake like Lebanon." The Armada darkening the coast of England by its frown, and causing faintness even among the brave, shall

perish as the foam of the sea ; while the May Flower, with its humble band of pilgrims, shall hover on the coast of New England amid wintry storms, too insignificant to excite the taunt of a cavalier or the fear of a savage ; but other ages shall read the triumph of their principles in the freedom of nations, and celebrate their praises “so long as the moon endureth.”

The Jews were numerous on the island of Cyprus. They were drawn thither for commercial purposes by its productiveness, and partly, perhaps, by its rich copper mines, half the revenue of which Augustus had made a present of to Herod the Great, to whom he committed the care of the other half. There were several Jewish synagogues at Salamis, where the missionaries proclaimed the Messiahship of Jesus to their countrymen on the Sabbath-days—with what success, or how long they continued at Salamis, the history does not mention. Leaving this city they went to Paphos, about a hundred miles distant at the western end of the island, where was the residence of the Roman governor.

Cyprus was deemed sacred to Venus, and as might be anticipated from her worship and rites, the inhabitants were sensual and corrupt. At old Paphos, two miles south-east of the new city of that name, was a temple of Venus, the road to

which at the annual festival of the goddess was crowded with pilgrims. It was another Daphne, where impurity was deified. The infamous rites were practised for four hundred years after the visit of Barnabas and Saul to the island.

At the time of our Saviour's appearance on earth, the world was sunk deep in corruption. Heathenism had well-nigh exhausted its power over the human mind. It had become too degraded in the Roman empire for credulity itself to embrace and take comfort from its principles and its religious rites and services. The thoughtful and serious, burdened with a feeling of guilt from which they saw no way of escape, endeavored to soothe their fears by superstition and scepticism. Such will ever be the result of perverting the religious sense inherent in our nature. If men fail to find peace in the exercise of true piety, they will seek it by denying the existence of a higher power to which they owe any obligations, or by absurd and degrading attempts to propitiate its favor. Infidelity and superstition run into each other. If the truth is cast off, its place will be filled by one or the other of these, and in the end by both. The want of something more than heathenism could supply to satisfy their religious cravings, prepared the earnest minded among the Gentiles to regard with favor any new system which promised them peace.

Hence, where the Jewish synagogues were established, Gentiles in considerable numbers either became proselytes to Judaism, adopting all its rites, or without going so far, were often found among its worshippers. Some sought to appease these cravings by serving new and strange gods, others by resorting to impostors who made pretensions to magical powers. The East was overrun with deceivers of this description, and at the time to which our narrative refers, they had overspread the West. Multitudes of Greek, Syrian, and Jewish fortune-tellers found patronage not only among the ignorant and weak, but among the leading men of the empire.

The history makes no mention of a synagogue of Jews at Paphos, but wherever or to whomsoever the missionaries delivered their message, it had awakened so much interest among the people as to be spoken of in the palace. Sergius Paulus the Roman governor, intelligent, thoughtful, and of an inquisitive mind, was disposed to hear the new doctrine for himself, respecting which he had heard a report from others. He sent for Barnabas and Saul to learn from their own lips "the word of God." They would hasten to comply with his request, rejoicing at this token of the divine approbation. They found in company with the governor a Jewish impostor named Bar-jesus,

who had assumed the name of Elymas, or, "The Wise." He seems to have exercised a powerful sway over Sergius Paulus, taking advantage, perhaps, of his deep religious sensibility which had degenerated into superstition. From the earnestness of the governor in listening to their discourse, the impostor would perceive at once that he was in danger of being supplanted. He set himself therefore in violent opposition to the messengers of God, trusting for success in the struggle to the strength of the charm which he had thrown around his victim.

Of old on mount Carmel, and the plain of Dura, truth and falsehood were brought face to face contending for mastery and dominion in the earth. Baal had yielded to Jehovah, the golden image to the God of Israel. And now under the reign of the Spirit shall his messenger quail before the pretended agent of the prince of darkness? Fixing a steady gaze on the haughty impostor—his commission "to the Gentiles" authenticated by the seal of the Holy Ghost—Saul addressed him with a dignity becoming his office, a severity justified by the offence: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be

blind, not seeing the sun for a season." "Mist and a darkness" immediately fell on the unhappy sorcerer, "and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand." How vividly would the sight remind the apostle of the scene at Damascus, and himself led by the hand into that city. How deeply would he feel, if not express the feeling, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And though the cause of truth, the success of his mission to the Gentiles, demanded the infliction of such a punishment, how gladly would sympathy even for his malicious adversary hail the implied remission, "for a season."

From the case of Elymas, we may learn how God regards those who attempt to prevent others from becoming pious. Success in their wicked purpose hardens their own hearts and makes them better satisfied that all religion is a delusion. And whether they succeed or not, they cut themselves off from the Fountain of light, and are encompassed with deeper "mist and darkness." "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

Whatever was the final effect of the miracle and punishment on Elymas, it was most happy on the heathen governor. "When he saw what was done," he "believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." Animated by this assurance

that the Holy Ghost was accompanying them, the missionaries "loosed from Paphos," and sailed for Perga in Pamphylia.

From the time of Augustus, the provinces of the Roman empire were divided into two classes, one of which was under the care of the senate, the other under that of the emperors. The governors of the former class were called proconsuls, and resigned their office at the expiration of a year. The island of Cyprus was under the care of the senate. Sergius Paulus would of course leave his office at the end of the year. We hear nothing of him after his conversion. If a native of Rome, he probably returned thither, and may have been one of the founders, or at least early members of the church in that city. In this case, however, we might expect to find some notice of him among the salutations in the letter which ten years later the apostle addressed to the church in Rome.

CHAPTER VII.

CHANGE OF NAME—MISSIONARY TOUR CONTINUED.

HITHERTO the historian has assigned Saul a position inferior to his colleague Barnabas, but henceforth he occupies the first place in the narrative, as he doubtless did in the synagogues and other assemblies where they addressed the multitudes. And not only has he henceforth a new position, but is designated by a new name. The reason for this change has given rise to various conjectures. Had he two names in childhood, one his Hebrew, the other his gentile appellation? the latter coming into use because he was now occupied chiefly among the heathen. Did he receive a new name from his entering now more directly on his great work of preaching to the Gentiles? as Abram was called Abraham when he had the promise of becoming "the father of many nations." Did Sergius Paulus honor him with his own name? Did Paul assume it to commemorate the Roman governor's conversion? or in a spirit of humility corresponding with the original meaning of the word Paulus—"little"—to indicate that he was "the least among the apostles?" Was it employed by his adversa-

ries to ridicule his diminutive stature? Was it substituted for his old name, which his violent persecutions had made odious to the Christian community? Or, finally, did the Romans and Greeks, who were in the habit of softening the Hebrew words in pronunciation, change his Hebrew name into Paul? All these conjectures have had their advocates.* Whether any or all of them were reasons for the change, it occurs in connection with the conversion of Sergius Paulus, and is henceforth employed not only by Luke in his narrative, but by Paul himself in all his epistles, and by Peter in the only instance, 2 Pet. 3 : 15, in which he refers to his brother apostle by name.

What induced Paul and Barnabas to direct their course to Pamphylia, is not stated. It may have been a specific direction of the Holy Ghost, as was their mission itself. Or some vessel about to sail for that part of Asia Minor may have offered a good opportunity for a passage thither. Or some merchant or mariner from this region, converted by their preaching at Paphos, may have urged them to visit the country. Or as Pamphylia borders on

* Paulus was "the surname of the noblest family of the Emilian house," highly distinguished at Rome. It has been conjectured that the ancestors of the apostle were freedmen of some member of this family, and adopted its name.

Cilicia, and the inhabitants of both "probably derived their origin from the same stock," Paul might wish to resume in the former province the successful labors which the coming of Barnabas seems to have broken off in the latter.

Perga, where the missionaries landed, on the southern coast of Asia Minor, lay about eight miles from the mouth of the river Cestrus. On an eminence in its neighborhood was a temple of Diana, at which a sacred meeting was held twice in a year. Nothing now remains of the city but ruins, amidst which shepherds pitch their tents and pasture their cattle. The apostles stopped but a short time at Perga. The inhabitants of this part of Asia Minor, at the beginning of summer, remove from the plain by the sea-shore "to the cool basin-like hollows in the mountains." They take with them their flocks and herds, and pass the summer on the upper grounds. It has been suggested as probable, that Paul and Barnabas arrived at Perga when the migration was about to take place, and that they prosecuted their journey into the interior with some of the companies. In ascending the mountains, a few hours change the temperature from the heat of summer so as to render the caverns a welcome shelter from the penetrating cold wind. "When the corn is in the ear on the low lands, ploughing and sowing are hardly well begun on

the highlands." After passing successively through "three belts of vegetation, first the oak woods, then the forests of pine, and lastly the dark scattered patches of the cedar-juniper," the travellers would emerge from the rugged mountain passes upon "the treeless plains of the interior, which stretch in dreary extension to the north and east," constituting "the central table-land of Asia Minor."

The sacred historian rarely if ever affords us a clue to the feelings and thoughts of Paul, as in his diversified travels by sea and by land he passed among the beautiful and sublime scenes of nature, or the magnificent and curious productions of art. Nor does the apostle himself in his letters now extant, unless by incidental allusions, let us into his state of mind in view of such objects. His impressions amid the wonders of nature and art might reappear in journals and familiar letters—had any such been written and come down to our time—showing the workings of an imagination worthy to be the companion of his mighty intellect. And yet we find it difficult to picture a mind so intense as Paul's, so constantly occupied with new and striking moral events, turning aside to indulge its tastes, or even to notice the excitement of its own susceptibilities from physical objects. At this time he might have been more than usually indisposed to dwell on outward scenes.

Mark, whose good qualities and fitness for an assistant Paul knew still better at a later day, 2 Tim. 4 : 11, had doubtless already won the esteem of his fellow-travellers. But just when his company and aid were becoming more desirable to Paul and Barnabas, about to enter a wild inhospitable region, he separated from them and returned to Jerusalem. Had this been done from failing health, or because—as has been said in excuse for his defection—he had a widowed mother who might need the services of her son, Paul would not have so firmly declined the offer of his company on a second tour. Acts 15 : 37–39. Perhaps Mark, trained in a city and indulged in childhood, shrunk from the hardships which he found involved in the missionary life. When the charm of novelty was worn away, the brilliant colors imagination had thrown around the work had faded, and the persecution was over, the love of home and of ease may have been too strong for his resolution to combat. Zeal that would sacrifice every thing personal for Christ, with the widest charity towards human weakness, characterized the apostle in his maturer age. Possibly at an earlier day this difficult union of opposite qualities was not so conspicuous in him. Not allowing any indulgence to interfere in his own case with his official duty as minister of the Gentiles, he might bear with less patience such indulgence

in others. As in company with strangers he toiled through narrow ravines or over rugged cliffs, beset by "perils of rivers" and by "perils of robbers"—for both of which that region was famous—he would often revert with sadness to the young missionary forsaking his work, and leaving a stain on his own name and on the gospel.

Passing along bleak uplands, through dreary villages, and large open plains which afford pasture for immense flocks of sheep, the travellers approached a beautiful lake, near the northern shore of which, and at the base of a mountain ridge, was a city called Antioch of Pisidia, to distinguish it from the Syrian Antioch. It was a Roman colony, the capital of a proconsular government, and bound by close ties to the metropolis. Lying on a much-frequented road, midway between Ephesus and Smyrna on the west, and the Cilician gates on the east, it was a city of considerable importance. The Pisidians were at this time "governed by petty chiefs, and principally supported themselves by plundering their neighbors. The Romans were never able to subdue them, though they obtained possession of some of their towns."

On the Sabbath after their arrival, Paul and Barnabas entered the synagogue and sat down. Whether they had become acquainted with any of their countrymen at Antioch, we do not know.

After a portion of the Mosaic law had been read, and another portion from the prophets, there was a pause, during which strangers and learned men had an opportunity to address the assembly. On this occasion the rulers of the synagogue invited the strangers, who perhaps had taken a seat appropriate to teachers, and whose appearance would indicate them to be serious, intelligent men, to offer a word of exhortation to the people. Paul immediately rose, and "beckoning with his hand" to secure their attention, began his address. The historian has given us a sketch of his discourse, and it probably shows Paul's manner of introducing the gospel to the notice of his countrymen during his mission.

Knowing from his own experience how agreeable it was to the Jews to hear of the special favor of God towards their forefathers—after the manner of Stephen, as already intimated—he sought to win their good will by an outline of their national history to the time of David, from whom the Messiah was to spring. He next showed, from their own prophets, that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah—that John the Baptist had borne witness of him—that the rulers at Jerusalem by rejecting and crucifying him only fulfilled their own scriptures, which had foretold that the Messiah should die and rise again, and that the apostles had

personal knowledge of the fact of his resurrection. He then assured them that there is forgiveness of sins through his mediation—forgiveness which could never be obtained through the Mosaic law. Finally, he warned them that it was dangerous to reject the message they had just heard—a danger which their own prophets had foreseen, and a sin which they had severely denounced.

As the worshippers were retiring, the address of Paul had been so impressive and acceptable, that he was invited to repeat it the next Sabbath. Numbers both of the Jews and of gentile proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas to their lodgings, to learn more of them respecting the truths which they had heard in the synagogue. Doubtless the intervening week was diligently employed by the apostles in conversing with inquirers who visited them for instruction, and making known their message both to their countrymen and to the Gentiles. By the next Sabbath so much interest had been excited throughout the city, that not only Jews and proselytes, but multitudes of the heathen thronged the house, eager to hear what Paul and Barnabas had to say. This crowding of the heathen population to their synagogue, not to hear of the Mosaic law and of Judaism, but to be told that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, and that the blessings of his reign were to be offered

impartially to all mankind, provoked the jealousy and indignation of the Jews. If this were so, they would cease to be "the chosen people." They turned against the apostles, interrupting their discourse by violent contradictions and reproaches.

But Paul and Barnabas, undaunted by their clamor, were only the more bold in proclaiming their message. They told their raging adversaries that they had first spoken the word of God to them, as was fit ; but since they rejected it, as if accounting themselves unworthy of eternal life, they should now turn to the Gentiles ; and that this was in harmony with their own prophets, who had foretold that the Messiah should be for a light to the Gentiles, and for salvation to the ends of the earth. When the Gentiles heard this, "they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord ; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." The apostles withdrew with their followers from the synagogue to "some private house or public building belonging to the heathen." A church was formed composed of Jews and Gentiles, and the "word of the Lord was published throughout all that region." Acts 13 : 49.

But the enmity of the unbelieving Jews was not satisfied with their exclusion from the synagogue. The religious susceptibility which, as before noticed, drove not a few Gentiles to the service of new

gods or to impostors, in search of peace, is strongest in the female mind. Many women among the heathen became proselytes to Judaism. At that time some of this class, high in rank at Antioch, were devoutly attached to it. Through their influence the Jews contrived to stir up the chief men of the city against the apostles, and they were expelled from the colony. Shaking off the dust of their feet, as the Saviour himself had commanded to be done in such a case, Matt. 10 : 14, they went to Iconium.

This was not a vain ceremony. We are not authorized to say that the rejection of the messengers of Christ was visited in judgment on the city, for other cities in the region which were then flourishing are now desolate. But as a matter of fact, though Antioch of Pisidia had not disappeared from the map of nations, the true seat of its location was lost sight of, and only came to light within some twenty years. Even then, the discovery was owing chiefly to a description of the city by an ancient writer contemporary with Paul.

Iconium is seventy-five or eighty miles east by south of Antioch in Pisidia, and about one hundred and twenty miles inland from the Mediterranean. It is at the foot of mount Taurus, in a large fertile plain, on the border of the lake Trogitis. Mountains covered with snow rise on every side except

the east, where the plain extends beyond the reach of the eye. Its modern name is Konieh. It is still a large and populous town. Some Christians of the Greek and Armenian churches, with a Greek metropolitan bishop, are still found in the suburbs of the city, not being permitted to reside within the walls.

Both Jews and Gentiles in considerable numbers at first believed the gospel in Iconium; but, as in Antioch, the unbelieving Jews prejudiced the minds of the heathen against Paul and Barnabas. But they continued to deliver their message, confirming it by miracles, of what particular description the historian does not state. In the end the city was divided into two parties, the one favoring, the other opposing the apostles. Having notice that their enemies, encouraged by the leading men of the city, were about to treat them with insult and violence, they fled to Lystra and Derbe, and preached the gospel there and in the wilder districts of the neighborhood.

These cities were in the province of Lycaonia, which lay north of Cilicia. It was a rough high table-land, almost destitute of fresh water, which was sometimes sold for money. Sheep thrive on its pasturage, and were raised in great numbers. The "mountains were noted for the concourse of wild asses." The inhabitants were uncultivated.

The Jews would not be tempted to resort to this region for the purposes of trade, and there appears to have been no synagogue either in Lystra or Derbé. The apostles would have to preach in the streets and public places, or to address individuals whom they might meet, as modern missionaries do on their tours in India and other heathen countries.

On one of these occasions, a man who from his birth had been unable to walk, listened with deep attention to the words of Paul. It would seem from the narrative, that from some cause he had an expectation of receiving aid from him. Perhaps he had heard of the miracles wrought in Iconium—for Lystra, where the lame man resided, is supposed to have been but about twenty miles distant from that city. Its exact site, however, has not been ascertained. Paul, perceiving that this poor cripple, like the lame man cured by Peter, “had faith to be healed,” said to him, with a loud voice, “Stand upright on thy feet.” The man at once sprang up and walked.

It is no wonder that such an incident should excite enthusiastic admiration among a rude and superstitious people, and that they should cry out, “The gods have come down to us in human form.” The heathen in ancient times were accustomed to believe that their deities occasionally visited the earth and mingled among men. Such a sentiment

may have had its origin in the divine appearances related in the early history of the Old Testament, or it may have been implanted in our nature to cause a more ready belief in the incarnation of Christ. As Jupiter was the guardian god of their city, Acts 14: 13, they took him for one of the celestial visitants; and as Mercury was usually represented as his attendant on such expeditions, they took him for the other. They dignified Barnabas, perhaps from his age and majestic appearance, with the name of the former; while Paul, "because he was the chief speaker," they called after the latter, whom they accounted the god of eloquence.

The priest of Jupiter and a noisy crowd, with oxen and garlands for decking the victims, rushed to the gates of the city to offer sacrifices to them as gods; when, rending their garments and running among the crowd, with a loud voice they deprecated the profanation, assuring them that they were only men like themselves, subject to wants and weaknesses, and that they came among them not to receive homage, but to turn them from this vain worship to the service of the true God, the Maker, Ruler, and Benefactor of all. He it was, and not Jupiter, who gave them "rain from heaven"—which to their country in its want of fresh water streams would be a special favor—"and fruitful seasons,

filling their hearts with food and gladness." Loath to be undeceived, the multitude were restrained with difficulty from completing the sacrifice. At length they retired, mortified, perhaps, at the rebuff, irritated at the censure cast on their religion, ungrateful for the beneficent cure wrought by Paul, and ready, with the fickleness common to the masses in every age, to pass to the opposite extreme of dishonor and violence.

To this they were soon roused by the Jews, who, bent on the destruction of the apostles, followed them from Antioch and Iconium. With zeal equal to what they had just manifested for sacrificing to the strangers, the mob, led on by the Jews, as the mode of attack indicates, now stoned Paul until, as they supposed, he was dead, and then dragged his body in fiendish triumph out of the city. But some true converts had been made even at Lystra, and as they stood in sorrow around his body, he rose from the earth and came into the city. This is the occasion to which he refers, when enumerating what he had suffered for Christ, 2 Cor. 11:25, "Once was I stoned." He was "cast down, but not destroyed." His work was not finished, and his enemies had not as yet power to put an end to his life.

The next day, the apostles left the city and went to Derbe. Though we must not suppose Paul was

actually killed and raised to life, yet it could have been scarcely less than a miracle, that after suffering such violence he should so soon have been able to journey, probably on foot. The power which in that very city but a few days before had instantly enabled the cripple to walk, could as easily at once make the apostle whole and strong for his missionary travels.

The exact situation of Derbe is not known. It was about sixty miles south by east from Iconium, and eighteen east of Lystra. A few hours' journey would bring the apostles to this city, where they preached the gospel successfully and apparently without opposition.

Derbe was the eastern limit of their present missionary tour. They were now not far from the Cilician gates, the pass through mount Taurus that leads to Paul's native province. But in face of the danger they might incur, instead of pressing homeward, they retraced their steps for the sake of strengthening the faith of the disciples, and completing the organization of the churches they had formed by ordaining elders to instruct and watch over them. This latter service the apostle was not accustomed to perform on his first visit to a city. He would leave a little time to test the stability of the converts and their qualifications, before he set any of them apart for a post on which the peace and

prosperity of the churches so much depend. "Not a novice," was one of the earliest precepts which regulated his own conduct in this matter, and which he left on record for the guidance of the church in all ages. 1 Tim. 3 : 6. Passing again through the Pisidian mountains, they came down to Pamphylia, stopping for a while to preach the gospel in Perga, where, at their first entrance into Asia Minor, their stay had been short. Some suppose the apostles spent only the intervening season between spring and autumn on this mission, so that now the inhabitants of the plain would have returned from their summer residence on the mountains. Others think this would leave too short a time for all the occurrences to take place related in the Acts, and extend the period to a year and a half. The result of their labors at Perga is not stated. They now visited Attalia, which lies on the Pamphylian gulf about twenty miles west of Perga. It is still flourishing under the modern name Adalia. From this city they sailed to Antioch, to render to the church an account of their successes and experiences in the prosecution of their mission.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DELEGATE TO JERUSALEM—REPROVES
PETER.

IN a world like ours, it could not be otherwise than that the gospel should meet obstacles to its progress. One of the first which it had to encounter was the adjustment of its relations to Judaism. This was a difficult matter to discuss coolly or to decide wisely, and it is well for Christianity that Providence pressed the settlement of it upon the church in the lifetime of the apostles.

For the purpose of keeping a knowledge of the true God alive in the world till the way was prepared for the introduction of the gospel, it was necessary to select one nation and surround them with a high wall of institutions and customs to separate them from contact with idolaters. This would almost of course breed pride and arrogance on one side, and hate and envy on the other. The Jew would detest the practices of the Gentile, while the Gentile would despise what he regarded as the bigotry of the Jew. The varied overturnings which brought the Hebrew commonwealth under the power of the heathen, modified in some respects these mutual feelings. But this forced subjection

often exasperated the Jews, and made them look with intense hope to the reign of the promised Messiah, who would break the yoke they wore so restlessly, and elevate them once more to the rank of "the chosen people." But now Jesus of Nazareth had been proclaimed "both Lord and Christ," and yet his kingdom was "not of this world." This was enough to cause his rejection by the bulk of the nation. And those who professed their belief in his Messiahship, were slow to admit the doctrine that his reign offered no peculiar distinctions and privileges to the Jews. If they were not to gain from it temporal dominion, they expected at least moral preëminence—that Judaism, to which they clung the closer as a bond of union when in respect to temporal power they were becoming denationalized, would be honored by accessions from the Gentiles. The true nature of Christianity, as we have seen, it was difficult even for the minds of the original apostles fully to apprehend. And doubtless few of the early converts in Judea suspected that it was to have an organization independent of Judaism. Peter's authority, and the sanction by the Holy Ghost of his conduct in admitting Gentiles to the church without the forms of the Mosaic ritual, silenced the open opposition of such ; but secret dissatisfaction seems to have been lurking in their hearts. At length a party was formed in the church

at Jerusalem whose bond of union was a determination to ingraft the forms of Judaism on Christianity. They must act promptly, or it would be too late. Gentile churches were beginning to be formed in which converts were admitted by baptism, to the neglect of the time-honored rite of circumcision.

The apostles had not returned from their missionary tour a moment too soon. Their presence was essential to the church at Antioch. Soon after their arrival, if indeed not before, certain persons came down from Jerusalem, with all the zeal of partisans, inculcating the doctrine that it was necessary for the Gentiles, if they would be saved, to conform to the rites of the Mosaic law. No man was more ready than Paul to make concessions for promoting peace and good will, where no sacrifice was required of sound principle; but his charity was not weakness, his liberality was not indifference to truth. A doctrine so alien from the gospel as he had been taught it "by revelation," and so contrary to his practice not only in the churches organized on his late mission, but in the church of Antioch itself, roused his determined opposition. He viewed it as in fact "another gospel," which, carried out to its full results, would degrade Christianity and "frustrate the grace of God. For if righteousness come by the law, then

is Christ dead in vain." Jews and Gentiles had mingled together as indeed brethren in the church at Antioch, or rather, they lived and acted in their ecclesiastical and social relations as if there was no "Jew," no "Greek;" all being "one in Christ Jesus." They ate together and visited together, throwing aside those feelings and habits of "caste" which were proper enough under Judaism, but worse than useless under the dispensation of the gospel. Paul could not patiently bear that this harmony should be exchanged for jealousy, "confusion, and every evil work," merely to gratify pharisaical self-righteousness, Acts 15 : 5, or Jewish national pride. In connection with Barnabas, he strove by earnest discussion to prevent so baleful a doctrine from gaining a lodgment in the church. But they could not exclude it altogether.

At length, it was thought expedient to refer the matter to the mother church at Jerusalem, which enjoyed a certain preëminence both from its locality and as founded by the original apostles. A deputation consisting of Paul and Barnabas, with certain others of the church, was accordingly dispatched to Jerusalem "unto the apostles and elders about this question." They went "along the great Roman road, which followed the Phœnician coast-line, and traces of which are still seen on the cliffs overhanging the sea, and thence through the

middle districts of Samaria and Judea." Their report of the interesting scenes they had witnessed among the heathen in Asia Minor caused great joy in the churches where they stopped on their journey.

The best critics and commentators regard this visit of Paul to Jerusalem as the same mentioned in Gal. 2 : 1. It seems that he was not only deputed by his brethren, but had a direct divine intimation to perform the service. He might not have thought it expedient, in the present state of the church at Antioch, for both himself and Barnabas to be absent, lest the "false brethren," Gal. 2 : 4, should improve the opportunity to diffuse their pernicious sentiments. And if only one of them was to join the deputation, he might think that Barnabas, "a Levite," who was heartily engaged with him in this matter and thoroughly understood it, would encounter less prejudice than himself among the Judaizers at Jerusalem.

In due time the messengers arrived in the holy city, and were received by the brethren. The first care of Paul was to have a private conference, Gal. 2 : 2, with James, Peter, and John,* who were "pillars" in the church, that he might inform them fully respecting his sentiments and practice on the disputed points. The business could be

* See Life of John, p. 102.

prepared by this private consultation for the more public discussion which was to follow. The greatest opposition which Paul had to expect was from Pharisees, who acknowledged the Messiahship of Jesus, while they held their old rigid notions respecting the rites and observances of the Mosaic law. Some of these perhaps had been his fellow-students and friends in the school of Gamaliel. That distinguished "doctor of the law" still survived, but like most wise men of the age esteemed the gospel as "foolishness." How would Paul, when the weighty business which brought him to Jerusalem was satisfactorily settled, yearn to look once more on the face of his venerable teacher, and say with affectionate respect, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good."

The apostles and elders of the church came together to consult and determine respecting the delicate, weighty matter submitted to their consideration. If there were in that assembly zealous partisans and eager disputants, there were manifestly solemnity, candor, a deep sense of responsibility, a spirit of prayer, and a willingness to sacrifice preconceived opinion to whatever the Holy Ghost should teach them was true and right. Well were it for the church if all assemblies of the kind had been pervaded by a like spirit.

After a debate which was doubtless earnest and

animated, Peter, whose authority would not be questioned and whose influence was great, was the first of the apostles to address the assembly. He reminded them how some time before God had sent him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and how the Holy Ghost had sanctioned his doing thus by miraculous outward signs and purification of their hearts by faith. He would not, then, presumptuously demand new proof of the divine will on this point, or impede the progress of the gospel by putting a yoke on the neck of the Gentiles which even the Jews had accounted grievous, since the burden was needless under the dispensation of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Next, Barnabas and Paul stated what they had seen and done among the Gentiles, and how God had sanctioned their doctrines and doings by "miracles and wonders."

The closing address, and an announcement of the result to which he would advise the assembly to come, was left—perhaps by previous agreement among the apostles—to James, the brother or cousin of Jesus. The Judaizers might expect him at least to favor their side, as he seems to have leaned more than either Peter or John to their old religion. At any rate, his rigidity and outward appearance seemed more in accordance with that dispensation. He referred the assembly to

what Peter had just said, as clearly showing God had now fulfilled among the Gentiles what was long ago foretold by their own prophets: compare Acts 15 : 16, 17, with Amos 9 : 11, 12. It did not become them to oppose his will by keeping up distinctions and customs, which, though originally of divine appointment, had accomplished their purpose. This settled the minds of the brethren, and the assembly harmoniously resolved to leave the Gentiles free to omit the peculiar rites of Judaism. But on the other hand, the Gentiles were admonished to abstain from certain customs of their own, to which the Jews, from education and the injunctions laid on them in the Old Testament, were equally hostile. They must cease from the impurity which had been mingled even with the worship of their gods, and nowhere more than in the neighborhood of some of these gentile churches—from what had been offered in sacrifice to idols—from the flesh of animals that had been strangled, and from eating blood. These restrictions were as necessary to keep the Gentiles from returning to their own idolatrous worship, as for removing stumbling-blocks out of the path of their Jewish brethren.

With joy Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch bearing a letter addressed not only to the Gentiles of the church in that city, but to those in Syria and Cilicia, and containing the determination of the

assembly, authenticated by "the apostles, elders, and brethren" of the church in Jerusalem. The result caused much rejoicing among the Gentiles. A great principle had been established for all future ages of the church, though the Judaizing spirit was not laid permanently to rest. To soothe asperity among the brethren at Antioch, and prevent any doubt as to the authenticity of the document, two prophets of good report in the church at Jerusalem, Judas and Silas, attended Paul on his return. The discourses and labors of these messengers had a happy influence in quieting dissensions and strengthening the faith of the brethren, and when after a while they went back to Jerusalem, they left the church in great tranquillity. Silas, however, either remained at Antioch, or soon returned thither.

While Paul and Barnabas were still pursuing their work in that city, Peter came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. For a time, he showed practically his assent to the doctrine which Paul taught on the disputed subject, by associating on familiar terms with the gentile members of the church. But certain persons from Jerusalem, either sent for some purpose by James, or coming of their own accord, made their appearance in the city. They were doubtless influential members of the Judaizing party, and they took no pains to con-

ceal their Jewish dislike to associate with people of other nations. In weak compliance with their prejudices, Peter "withdrew and separated himself" from the Gentiles; thus "giving the sanction of his example to the introduction of *caste* into the church of Christ." And so powerful was the tide of old prejudices which now set in, that even Barnabas "was carried away with the dissimulation." With mingled shame and sorrow that he was compelled to such a duty, Paul "withstood Peter to the face," and placed before him in bold relief the inconsistency of his conduct. He had hoped for much comfort and aid in his work from the visit of his distinguished brother, and now Satan himself could not contrive a craftier scheme to destroy his influence as apostle of the Gentiles, than to allure Peter to such an act. The rebuke seems to have been public. How Peter received it for the moment we are not informed. He doubtless soon saw his criminality, and was melted into penitence. His regard for his reprover would be enhanced by this evidence of Christian fidelity, and he would more than ever esteem and be ready to acknowledge him as his "beloved brother Paul."

If the supremacy of Peter had at that time been recognized in the church, would Paul have had the effrontery thus to reprove him publicly for a defection involving an essential principle of Christianity?

And what is more incredible, would he in that case have aggravated the offence by perpetuating a remembrance of it in his epistle to the churches in Galatia, one object of which was to assert his equality with Peter and the other apostles of Christ?

CHAPTER IX.

DISSENSION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS—TOUR
WITH SILAS.

WHEN the great controversy that had so long filled his mind and heart was thus happily settled, and the church at Antioch was once more enjoying harmony, the thoughts of Paul reverted to the churches he had gathered in his late mission among the heathen. Of these first-fruits of his labors in Asia Minor, he could say emphatically, as of his Thessalonian converts at a later day, "Ye are our glory and joy;" "We live, if ye stand fast in the Lord." As there were many other Christian teachers, Acts 15 : 35, besides him and Barnabas at Antioch, he proposed to the latter a tour to see whether these churches remained steadfast in the faith. Barnabas appears to have been willing to join him in such an expedition, but wished to take Mark along with them.

The young man might be desirous of another opportunity to show that, though delicately bred, he could bear "hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." He may have had a stronger love than at first for the work of a missionary, or allurements which before were too powerful for his resolution

may have been taken out of the way. He had seen Paul and Barnabas during their visit to Jerusalem, and the account of their successes may have re-inspired his zeal. But Paul seems still to have feared that Mark would draw back in the hour of trial, and expose the gospel to fresh reproach. In a matter which concerned the gospel, Paul would "know no man after the flesh," and he may not have been considerate enough of the feelings of Barnabas towards his relative. Firmness which will carry a cherished purpose at any personal hazard, is not always combined with marked gentle-

ness.

Barnabas, on the other hand, might not at this time bear opposition to his wish on this point so well from Paul as from another. He must have felt that the late rebuke of Peter was equally applicable to himself, and good man as he was, some traces of irritation may have lingered in his bosom. In this state of mind he might think Paul unreasonable in not gratifying his desire. He had done him good service at a time when he needed friends and the other apostles were shy of him, and now it might seem hard to be denied so small a favor. Once, too, he took precedence of Paul in the estimation of the church, while now he seemed to be left in the background. The reputation and influence of Paul were increasing, while his own in-

comparison seemed daily becoming less. His honest heart would not harbor jealousy, but, unperceived, it might insinuate itself through the crevices of riven friendship.

They separated, we may hope not without an amicable adjustment of their difficulties and a division of the missionary field between them. Barnabas, attended by his young relative, sailed to Cyprus, where his "tomb is still shown." Paul, with Silas for a companion, "being commended by the brethren to the grace of God," went through Syria and Cilicia on his proposed mission. This was probably in the spring, A. D. 51. As they passed through well-remembered scenes where they had suffered or rejoiced and prayed together, Paul and Barnabas would often think of each other with pain and grief at the recollection of their contention, but the narrative contains no farther notice of their joint labors. Their next meeting, perhaps, was in a world where dissensions never molest hearts bound together by the golden chain of love.

From Antioch to Derbe, the last city eastward visited by Paul and Barnabas, the distance was comparatively short through the Syrian and Cilician gates. Paul may have taken this land route on his second missionary tour, because there was at Seleucia "no vessel bound for Pamphylia," or he

might wish to visit his friends at Tarsus, and pass a little time among the churches in Cilicia, many of which were gathered by him before he went with Barnabas to Antioch. If he had not visited them while residing in the latter city, he would be well-informed as to their condition. It seems probable that the dissensions prevailing in the church at Antioch had also agitated those in the countries around, for the apostolic letter was directed to the gentile brethren in Cilicia as well as in Syria. By making known the contents of this letter, Paul confirmed the faith of the Cilician brethren, just as the brethren at Antioch were "confirmed" when it was explained to them by Judas and Silas.

After travelling three or four days from Tarsus through the wild scenes of mount Taurus, Paul approached the city of Derbe, and the Christians there doubtless received him with joy.

From Derbe, Paul and Silas next went to Lystra, where the apostles had first been treated as gods, and then driven from the city. Here was the residence of Timothy, a young man whose mother was a Jewess, but his father a Greek—perhaps a proselyte to the Jewish religion. Timothy had been strictly trained by his pious mother and grandmother, and "from a child" had been taught the "Scriptures" either in the Hebrew or Greek. When

Paul and Barnabas were in Lystra, he became a convert to the Christian faith, and the violence of his townsmen only attached the generous youth more closely to the apostle. No heart was now more gladdened than Timothy's by his return. He had been a disciple at this time, probably, three or four years. Young as he was, his faith and piety were conspicuous among the Christians both of Lystra and Iconium. In addition to this, his native traits of character doubtless attracted the notice of Paul. He needed some one in whom he could confide to perform various offices required in the superintendence of the churches. Many services of this sort which could be executed in modern times through public agency, could at that period be effected only by private means. He therefore selected Timothy for an assistant in his work, and all the subsequent notices of the young man confirm the doubtless more than human wisdom of the choice. Faithful, affectionate, zealous, disinterested, consistent, he gave the apostle no occasion to regret taking him as an associate. He regarded the apostle with filial tenderness, and in return all the fulness of paternal love flowed forth from the apostle's heart at the mention of his "son Timothy."

In the circumstances of the times, the mixed origin of Timothy may have had some influence on the apostle's choice. Both Jews and Greeks would

look complacently on his young assistant as of kindred blood, and thus their good will be gained for himself. One thing, however, was wanting to render Timothy an unexceptionable companion of the apostle. His family was well known to all the Jews in that region, and they knew equally well that, having a Greek father, he had not been admitted within the pale of God's ancient covenant in the appointed mode. This disqualification if not removed would prejudice their minds not only against Timothy, but against the missionaries, and they would be impeded in their intercourse with their countrymen. As distinguished for concession, when a good object could be attained without compromising principle, as he was for firmness in maintaining the true and the right, Paul yielded to Jewish prejudices on this occasion, "that he might gain the Jews." There was no danger that either Timothy, or the Christian brotherhood, would mistake this act as implying a binding obligation of the Mosaic law on the Gentiles. That point had been settled, and he was bearing the decision wherever he went. They would all understand his motive for concession in the present instance, and that he had made no sacrifice of principle. His conduct, as explained by circumstances, was only expressing in act what he taught in words, that "neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but

a new creature"—that outward rites are trifles compared with the renovation of the heart.

Paul and Silas visited Iconium, and probably spent some weeks there, Acts 16:2, 3; but whether they went farther west to Antioch in Pisidia, is not known. It seems probable that they would visit the converts in that city, and communicate to them the letter from the church at Jerusalem. Like the reviving verdure of these thirsty uplands under the "rains from heaven," the renewed freshness and vigor of the "plants of righteousness" marked the course of the missionaries. The churches "were established in the faith, and increased in numbers daily."

Paul with his companions now struck out anew into the heathen world, to preach Christ where he had not been named. They turned northward into the region of Galatia. This was a Roman province, deriving its name from the Galatæ or Gauls, who had migrated hither from Europe. It was for the most part a fruitful and well-peopled country. The customs and languages of the Gauls and Greeks were here intermingled. The people are described as having been susceptible of quick impressions and sudden changes—as enthusiastic, but fickle, and liable from excessive vanity to frequent disunion. Luke merely mentions the passing of the missionaries through this province, but we learn from

Paul's letter to the churches of Galatia that he was received there with great cordiality—indeed, would have been scarcely more welcome, if he had been “an angel of God,” or “Christ Jesus” himself. Gal. 4 : 14. The gospel took quick root, and the people were filled with gladness.

As Paul was meditating to turn his course in a south-westerly direction, from Galatia into the province of Proconsular Asia towards Ephesus, the Holy Spirit, in some manner of which we are not informed, forbade him to preach the gospel in that region. Ephesus, Miletus, and other places where Paul afterwards labored with great success, lay in this province ; but the time had not yet come to introduce the gospel here, or the way was more open for its introduction into another part of the heathen world, or others might labor in this region while he was employed to more advantage elsewhere. 1 Pet. 1 : 1. His attention was next turned to a northern route, leading into Bythinia. About to enter this province, he was again admonished by the same Spirit to forbear. He might for the moment wonder what was meant by this repeated frustration of his plans, but he was not long in suspense. With Silas and Timothy, he continued his tour westward to Troas, on the shore of the Aegean sea, which divides Asia from Macedonia and Greece.

Interrupted in his plans, and casting about to

discover what other course he should take to fulfill his mission to the Gentiles, Paul might send his thoughts across the Aegean. Athos, a mountain on a peninsula of Macedonia, more than three thousand feet high, could be plainly seen "from the Asiatic coast at sunset." By blocking up his way in Asia, might not Providence intend to have him bear the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ to the continent of Europe, which still lay in the unbroken darkness of heathenism? In a vision of the night, a Macedonian seemed to stand by him and intreat him: "Come over to Macedonia, and help us." If his thoughts and his prayers for guidance had been previously turned into this channel, the heavenly vision would ripen the suggestion into a confirmed purpose. "Assuredly gathering," from a comparison of all the circumstances, that he was divinely called to preach the gospel to the people of the West, he sought at once a passage into Macedonia.

Another companion, "Luke the beloved physician," here joined the Christian travellers. Whether this was his first acquaintance with Paul, or whether, as has been suggested, he now by previous arrangement joined the mission, we do not know. Luke wrote "*The Acts of the Apostles*," but it is only a change of persons—"we endeavored to

* Probably there were some Christians in Rome at this time.

go into Macedonia"—and as some have thought, greater vividness in the style of this part of the history, that indicate his accession to the mission. From his name, he is supposed to have descended from heathen ancestors. Eusebius states that Luke was born at Antioch. If so, he was doubtless acquainted with Paul before they met at Troas, and the apostle found in him not only a brother on whose tried friendship he could safely rely, but an associate whose medical skill might be of service in time of need, and might open the way for the publication of the gospel among the heathen.

CHAPTER X.

PASSES OVER TO EUROPE—IMPRISONED AT
PHILIPPI.

EMBARKING at Troas, the travellers sailed in a northerly course with a fair wind, leaving the islands of Tenedos and Imbros at the left ; then bearing more to the westward, they took shelter for the night under the high shore of the island of Samothrace. The next day, still sailing westerly, they arrived at Neapolis, the seaport of Philippi. This was the first spot on the European continent trodden by the apostle. In going from Neapolis to Philippi, they would ascend an elevated ridge of land, on the western side of which lies the celebrated plain of Philippi, where, not a century before, Antony and Octavianus gained a great victory over the forces of the Roman republicans under Brutus and Cassius. Paul, as he crossed this battlefield, would be thinking of moral victories and bloodless conquests, the triumphs of the gospel over heathenism, the founding of a kingdom which should break in pieces all other kingdoms, while itself should "stand for ever."

Philippi took the name of its founder Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. In its vicinity were

mines of gold and silver. When Macedonia became subject to the Romans, they established a colony there. In such colonies, the Roman laws were in full force; Roman insignia were seen on every side; the Latin language was spoken; the coinage, even in Greek provinces, had Latin inscriptions; the citizens "were entirely free from any intrusion by the governor of the province," their affairs being regulated by their own magistrates, and "their names still enrolled in one of the Roman tribes." As an adopted Roman citizen, Paul had all the privileges of a native-born Roman. The most important of these were, "exemption from scourging, and freedom from arrest, except in extreme cases; and in all cases, the right of appeal from the magistrate to the emperor." Providence had thrown these safeguards around the devoted missionaries by directing their course to such a colony.

Few Jews resided at Philippi, and there was no synagogue. As was customary with their nation, some devout persons met at the river-side "out of the city" in a slight structure, or in the open air, for religious worship. Paul and his companions would of course wend their way to this point on the Sabbath, to unite in the devotions and preach the gospel to the worshippers. The congregation seems to have been composed chiefly of women, a circumstance not unusual in any age, and for rea-

sons already suggested, not at all surprising in that age. The Holy Spirit impressed the truth on the heart of one of these women, a Jewish proselyte named Lydia, from Thyatira in Asia Minor. She was a dealer in purple dyes, or in clothing of that color. Thyatira was noted in ancient times for the art of dyeing, as appears from inscriptions which confirm Luke's account; and large quantities of scarlet cloth are now sent weekly from that town to Smyrna. Lydia was convinced that Jesus is the true Messiah, and "was baptized, and her household." Hers was not a barren faith. It opened her heart to Christian love and the practice of Christian hospitality. She constrained the apostle with his companions to make her house their home while they remained at Philippi.

When Lydia returned to her native city, she would endeavor to persuade her friends to receive the truth she had learned abroad; and thus Paul may successfully have planted at Philippi the seeds for a church at Thyatira, which he was forbidden to plant in Thyatira itself. How happy would it be for many a town in our own land, if all who go forth for a temporary residence returned with the spirit of Lydia to bless the places of their nativity, instead of returning, as many do, to blast them by pernicious sentiments and loose practices.

For a while there seems to have been no serious

resistance to the gospel at Philippi. The missionaries continued day after day their work at the river-side, and succeeded in gathering a church. Acts 16 : 40. At length opposition arose, but not from the quarter usual at that period. There were no Jews residing in Philippi, or too few to molest the missionaries. But if Judaism was not there, the spirit of gain, which even now so often rages against the principles of the gospel, was aroused in this heathen city to counterwork the progress of Christianity. A young female, who, in accordance with the belief of the heathen in those times, was esteemed to be inspired by Apollo, their god of divination, had frequent opportunities to hear Paul, and his words had left an impression on her mind. Meeting the Christian congregation, as for greater quiet they went forth from the city to worship, she followed him and his companions, and mingling what she heard from him with her own heathenish notions, "or because the evil spirit in her was compelled to speak the truth," cried out, "These men are the servants of the most high God, who show unto us the way of salvation." At first, the apostle seems to have taken no notice of her; but as she continued to follow them day after day, grieved at the sight of her miserable condition, and unwilling that the gospel should appear to have any alliance with heathenish error, even if it should

offer a temporary advantage, he "in the name of Jesus Christ," commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. That same hour she was restored to her right mind.

In the ancient heathen oracles, "it was usual for the prophetic spirit to make itself known by an internal muttering of ventriloquism." Persons in this miserable condition were "used by others for the purpose of gain. Frequently they were slaves; and there were cases of joint proprietorship in these unhappy instruments of public superstition." Whatever may be true of the ancient heathen world, we cannot doubt that in the time of Jesus Christ and his apostles, the workings of the invisible agents of wickedness were peculiarly manifest. This may have been permitted for the special display of divine power in their dispossession.

The restoration of this woman to mental soundness put an end to the large gains accruing to the owners from her soothsaying. They were of course quite indignant at the strangers for interfering in what they regarded as an honest business, which not only gave them a livelihood, but perhaps was a source of credit and emolument to the city. They laid hold of Paul and Silas, the most active of the party in this matter, and brought them before the magistrates, as turbulent Jews, who were

attempting to introduce into the colony new religious observances, which, as Roman citizens, they could not lawfully adopt.* The enemies of Christianity are prone to oppose its peaceful progress, and then charge their own violence to its account. So it was in the present case. Paul and his companions had done nothing to disturb the peace of the city. This part of the charge was unfounded. But the charge of introducing new religious observances had more plausibility. The introduction of new religions and gods was forbidden by the Roman laws. The Jews were allowed their own national worship, but the spirit of the laws was hostile to religious innovations.

In such a matter it was easy to arouse the rage of the populace, who regarded the wild ravings of the Pythoness as sacred inspirations. The magistrates shared in the excitement, and without examination, ordered the accused to be scourged,† and

* But a little while before, the Jews had for turbulence been expelled from Rome.

† "The instrument commonly used for this purpose was a whip, or scourge, consisting often of two lashes, 'knotted with bones, or heavy indented circles of bronze, or terminated by hooks, in which case it was aptly denominated a *scorpion*.' The punishment was inflicted on the naked back of the sufferer. A single blow would sometimes lay the flesh open to the bones." Hackett on the Acts, to whose work we are much indebted.

cast into prison. Tyrants can lacerate the body, and manacle the hands, and compress the feet in the stocks, but they cannot fetter the immortal spirit. At midnight, that lone, dank, stifling dungeon, unused to all sounds but the groans and wails and curses of its unhappy victims, now echoed with the voice of prayer and praise to the God of Israel. The other prisoners listened with wonder and awe, as lost spirits might listen to seraph strains swelling through the bottomless pit. Suddenly an earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, burst open its doors, and loosed the bands of the prisoners. But cowed down by fear, the rest thought not of flight, and Paul and Silas had no desire to escape. Supposing they had fled, and that in accordance with Roman law, disgrace or death would be the forfeit for what might be deemed his negligence, the jailer drew his sword to take his own life. An exclamation falling on the quick ear of Paul, or a divine intimation, revealed the meditated purpose, and forgetting the cruelty of the Roman official, he cried out with a loud voice, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." Relieved from his terror, the jailer called for a light, and rushing to the "inner prison," fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas. In a new and deeper anxiety, unmindful of the danger incurred by such a step, he loosed their feet from the stocks,

and bringing them forth from the dungeon, in a voice contrasting strongly with the wonted harsh accents of the place, said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Floating rumors respecting Paul and Silas may have come to his ears in connection with the words of the Pythoness, which, coupled with their conduct and the miraculous occurrences, were employed by the Spirit to awaken a sense of guilt in his mind and lead him to seek the way of life. Forgetting their own sufferings in view of the divine interpositions, they replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Pained and bloody as they were, they followed up this brief answer by other suitable instructions to himself and his household, who were now anxiously clustering around the strangers. The rough keeper, with the gentleness of the new spirit springing up in his heart, washed their wounds, and was baptized in the name of Christ. Unawed by fear of the magistrates or of popular violence, he took them up to his own house, set food before them, and rejoiced with his family in the salvation of God.

Morning was now dawning, and the jailer might begin to revolve in his mind how he should answer to the magistrates for his treatment of the prisoners. But the magistrates themselves seem not to have been satisfied with their own summary deal-

ings with them. Possibly the quaking earth had alarmed them, and they may have begun to suspect that Paul and Silas were indeed "servants of the Most High," and that a divine power was showing displeasure at the ill-treatment of its messengers. Whatever was the reason, they sent officers as soon as it was day to bid the jailer dismiss the prisoners. This would be joyful news to him, as it would free him from all danger of censure, and give him the pleasure of releasing his benefactors from confinement. But Paul would not be sent off in this manner. He did not choose to be treated as a malefactor in contravention of justice and his rights as a Roman citizen, and he would teach the magistrates not to be cruel and unjust to the defenceless. He could suffer for Christ, if there was need of it to defend the gospel, but he did not court suffering and martyrdom for its own sake or for the gratification of despots. And he might wish, by showing the magistrates that they were now in his power, to make them treat the converts kindly whom he was about to leave at Philippi. "They have beaten us openly," he said to the officers, "uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out." Their deliverance from prison, he insisted, should be as public as their scourging and

confinement. And when the magistrates came and brought them out, and intreated them to leave the city, they did not hurry away privately as if criminals. They went openly to the house of Lydia, where they met the brethren and exhorted them to remain steadfast in the faith. At their departure they had the satisfaction of leaving behind them in the colony a church, which they trusted would be worth all the cost of its planting. Nor were they disappointed. No church was a greater comfort to the apostle than this at Philippi, whose foundations were cemented by his own blood. The experience of the Christian band at Philippi is an illustration of the maxim, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." One night of suffering accomplished more for the gospel in that city than "many days" of earnest apostolic labor.

Let not Christians despond or despair when error and iniquity are triumphant for a season in any place. The course of truth on earth has been just what might have been expected from the struggle it maintains, in coöperation with the Holy Spirit, against human depravity. *Now* it is victorious, when reason and conscience have the mastery of the mind; *anon* it is overcome, when passion or interest set error and iniquity on the throne of the heart. But to despair of its final success, however

low or long it may be cast down, dishonors its heavenly origin, its native strength, and its almighty Ally. Truth may fall in the streets, but it will rise again ; it may be trampled in the dust, but it will soon be seen in its beautiful garments ; it may seemingly be defeated and jeered at, but it will ere long "lead its captivity captive, and drag its enemies at the chariot wheels of its triumph."

CHAPTER X.

PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND BEREÆ.

TIMOTHY and Luke, against whom, as less conspicuous members of the mission, the excitement was not so intense, remained at Philippi to instruct and counsel the converts. Timothy soon rejoined Paul either at Thessalonica or Berea. During this short interval he had become endeared to the church at Philippi. Phil. 2: 19-22. Luke seems not to have rejoined Paul for five or six years, Acts 20: 5, and that he was again in his company, we learn as before only by the change in the narrative from the third to the first person. Paul and Silas, with what speed they could after their severe scourging, continued their tour through Amphipolis and Apollonia, the former of which was thirty-three, and the latter sixty-three miles south-westward of Philippi. Amphipolis lay on the Strymonic gulf. It was the capital of this part of Macedonia, and at that time a large commercial city. Little is known of Apollonia. The missionaries seem to have made only a temporary stay in these cities, where probably few if any Jews had a residence.

Paul and Silas were now on the great Roman road, which was marked with milestones from

Dyrrhachium on the eastern shore of the Adriatic sea to the river Hebrus in Thrace, a distance of five hundred miles. It passed through Thessalonica, the next stopping-place of the travellers. This city is about one hundred miles south-westerly of Philippi. It was the residence of the proconsular governor of Macedonia. It derived its name from a daughter of Philip, the wife of Cassander, who, on the division of Alexander's empire among his generals, obtained Macedonia and Greece. Situated on the great Egnatian road just referred to, possessed of an excellent harbor, and convenient for commercial intercourse not only with the interior, but with the Hellespont and Asia Minor, it was a very populous and flourishing city. It has still sixty or seventy thousand inhabitants, about half of whom are Jews. Standing on a steep declivity, it presents an imposing appearance.

At such a point we might expect Paul, who knew well the influence of cities on the promulgation of the gospel, would attempt to establish a church. The synagogues of the Jews, who thronged the centres of business, would give him access to the heathen, and the wide commercial intercourse would aid in diffusing his message in the surrounding regions, 1 Thess. 1:8. At that period, perhaps, cities were even more closely connected with the progress of the gospel than in Christian countries

at the present time, as the population would cluster in walled towns, seeking shelter from violence and rapine.

Fresh from the successes as well as sufferings and deliverances of Philippi, the apostle would labor with ardor and strong faith in Thessalonica, and the proof of sincerity borne even in his body would add force to his teachings. Every new conquest would strengthen his confidence in the power of the gospel through the Holy Spirit to subdue not only the unbelief of the Jews, but the ignorance, superstition, and depravity of the heathen. No wonder, then, if his words in such circumstances should burst forth glowing and persuasive from his lips, and the results which at other times require years, should be crowded into the short space of a few days or weeks.

For three successive Sabbaths, and doubtless from house to house during the week, he strove to convince the Jews from their own Scriptures that their promised Messiah was to suffer and rise again from the dead, and that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah. In meeting their objections, he would be necessarily drawn to speak of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom—that it is not a temporal dominion as they expected, but spiritual—that though now in heaven, he would descend again to earth. The fact he knew from revelation, but the

time and the manner were not revealed. Toiling and tried, the expectation of his Lord's coming was a rich source of comfort to which he could not but often resort, and his vivid representations of that joyful scene may have communicated to some of his converts the expectation of its near approach. 1 Thess. 4 : 13, etc. ; 2 Thess. 2 : 2.

In the interval Paul spent at Thessalonica, his converts at Philippi sent him aid at least twice, thinking probably that he might be in want, Phil. 4 : 16. They knew that both he and Silas, departing hastily from Philippi, had no means of support but what they could obtain from the charity of strangers, or from their own labor. And they might suppose that, weak and wounded from the rough treatment at Philippi, their beloved teachers would be poorly fitted for bodily toil. This kind concern for his welfare the apostle never forgot ; not because he desired "a gift," but because it proved that the Christian spirit dwelt in the hearts of his converts. Paul was too independent to rely on others for support which he could obtain from his own labor. He would set an example of industry to his converts, that they might honor the gospel, and have the means of doing good to others. And claiming the right by divine appointment of support while preaching the gospel, he would in his own case forego his right, that he might not

give his opposers occasion to accuse him of selfish motives in his missionary work. Neglecting no opportunity to press his message on Jew and Gentile, he was diligent "night and day" in the calling to which he had been trained in boyhood along with the study of the law, 2 Thess. 3:8, 9.

Luke in his concise account mentions only the subjects of Paul's discussions with the Jews, but from the letter of the apostle to the Thessalonians, written at Corinth the same year, we learn incidentally that he dwelt on various other topics more appropriate to the Gentiles. He warned them to avoid the vices which they had practised in their heathenish state, to lead lives of purity, industry, and honesty, that they thus might not bring reproach on the gospel, but "walk worthy of God," who had called them "unto his kingdom and glory." The labors of the missionaries were not long without fruit. Some of their own countrymen believed, and of the Jewish proselytes "a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." The church in this city evidently consisted to a great extent of native Greeks, 1 Thess. 2:14-16. It has been observed that "the ancient Jewish scriptures are not once quoted" in either of the epistles to the Thessalonians.

As usual, the apostle's success roused the fanatical fury of the unbelieving Jews. They gathered

a company from the lazy rabble that hung around the market-places, ready, as persons of the same class ever are, to oppose a moral reformation, and assaulted the house of Jason, a Christian with whom Paul was staying. Not finding the apostle, they dragged Jason and some other converts before the judgment-seat, crying out, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also ; whom Jason hath received : and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus." Wrested as the truth was, the charge had some speciousness. As just stated, Paul, in answering the objections of his unbelieving countrymen, must have unfolded his own views respecting the reign of Christ. The magistrates of Thessalonica, which was a "free city," anxious to keep on good terms with the Roman emperor, were troubled at the commotion ; but noting the sort of men who were now showing so much regard for the public welfare, they appear to have apprehended the true state of the case. Taking security therefore of Jason that there should be no violation of the public peace, they dismissed the accused.

It has been observed, as an evidence of Luke's accuracy as a historian, that he gives to the magistrates of Thessalonica a peculiar title, "*politarchs*," translated rulers, Acts 17 : 6, 8, mentioned by no

other ancient writer. But on a triumphal arch, built as is thought to commemorate the victory of Augustus and Antony on the plain of Philippi, and which, "disfigured by time and injury, and partly concealed by Turkish houses," still spans one of the streets of Thessalonica, is an inscription that "gives this title to the magistrates of the place, informs us of the number, and mentions the very names of some who bore the office not long before the day of Paul."

It was no longer safe for the apostle to continue in Thessalonica. The tumult would be renewed, and he would involve not only himself, but his friends in trouble. Under cover of night, therefore, he departed with Silas from the city to go to Berea. It must have been painful to be separated so soon and suddenly from a church dear to his heart, and to be driven from a field which promised so abundant a harvest. He, however, hoped that the separation would be short, 1 Thess. 2:17, 18, and that he might return to the city, when the popular fury had subsided. He even seems to have had some purpose to return, but was prevented from executing it.

Berea was about fifty miles south-westerly of Thessalonica, at the foot of mount Bermius, a continuation of the great range of Olympus. It has now a population of fifteen to twenty thousand.

There was a synagogue in the city, to which the missionaries as usual directed their way. The Jews of Berea, more noble-minded and teachable than those of Thessalonica, readily listened to the strangers, and set themselves to compare their teachings with the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah. The consequence of this candid, earnest, daily inquiry after truth, as we might expect, was in many a belief in the Messiahship of Jesus. Of the chief women and men among the Greeks not a few became converts to Christianity. But the Jews of Thessalonica, hearing of Paul's success, as they soon would from the frequent communication between the two cities, came to Berea to renew their agitation in that city. It was thought best for Paul, against whom the chief rage of the enemy was directed, to retire before the storm. But regard for his own safety did not make him unmindful of the welfare of his converts. He left Silas and Timothy behind for a while to carry on the work, and it is probable that, attended by several of his converts, he bent his course to the Aegean, which was fifteen or twenty miles distant, and embarked in some vessel for Athens. With a fair wind the voyage could be accomplished in about three days.

CHAPTER XI.

PAUL AT ATHENS—SPEECH ON MARS' HILL.

GUIDED by an unseen hand, Paul was now on his way to the celebrated city, which has been called "the eye of Greece." But separated from his companions, and interrupted in the great work which engrossed all his faculties, his were not the thoughts or the anticipations of those who come from far to relax their minds, indulge their curiosity, or improve their taste amid its wonders of art. Anxiety about his Macedonian converts, the feeling of loneliness, the craving for sympathy, which at Athens made the absence of Timothy so great a privation, 1 Thess. 3 : 1, would now oppress his spirit. The majestic Olympus, Ossa and Pelion of fabled memory, even Thermopylæ itself, pointed out to him by his Berean attendants as they sailed along the classic shores of Greece, would fall on his ear as common names. And when the Saronic gulf opened upon them, and light flashing from the colossal statue of Minerva on the height of the Acropolis, announced their approach to a city where, as severely said by a heathen, "It was easier to find a god than a man," sadness and not exultation would rule in the heart of the missionary traveller.

The mountain-temple of the Holy City, whose dazzling splendors the eye could not bear to look upon, might by contrast rise before his mind and excite the grateful emotion, "Happy is that people whose God is Jehovah."

The Pireus where he landed was five miles from the city proper, with which it was once connected by a strongly fortified wall, that in the time of Paul was fallen into decay. Sending back word by the brethren who had accompanied him to Athens, for Silas and Timothy to rejoin him with all speed, he awaited their arrival in that city. We might think he would now allow himself a little leisure for examining the works of art in which Athens abounded beyond any other spot on earth. He doubtless passed around the city with an observing eye, but he had other work to do than admiring its artistic beauties. Genius, however brilliant and rich in design—art, however exquisite in execution, could not tempt him from his high calling as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. He would not half forget the vileness of idolatry in admiration of the statue or temple of the idol, nor lament that Christianity would dim the attractions of so fair a scene. He left it for others to exalt taste and art above principle, and prefer the eternal reign of error to marring the curious workmanship of her throne in displacing her.

Paul could not but be moved by the religious sentiment which found expression in every part of Athens. Its temples, its altars, its statues in honor of almost every object of human worship; its deification of abstract qualities, fame, modesty, envy, persuasion, pity; its consecration of "every public place and building as a sanctuary," showed a temper which he would not treat harshly. But still his soul was deeply stirred within him when he "saw the city full of idols." After all their outward show of religion—and religion never labored with more ardor and skill to exhibit itself in forms of external beauty—the Athenians were "without God in the world." He could not restrain his feelings within his own bosom. Alone as he was, he discussed with his countrymen in their synagogue on the Sabbath the claims of Jesus to be the Messiah, and preached the gospel to those he met daily in the Agora, "the market-place," the most frequented spot in the city. His earnestness and arguments soon attracted the notice of the inquisitive Athenians, and brought him into collision with philosophers of different schools of which Athens was the seat. He was well aware that he had not now to deal with the rude inhabitants of the mountain regions of Asia Minor, or with the more cultivated citizens of Macedonia, but that he would have to meet the learning and philosophy

of heathenism in its strong-hold. Yet he shrunk not from the work to which Providence had manifestly called him by arresting his efforts in other cities. - Strong "in the Lord and in the power of his might," he went forth from day to day proclaiming the truth, and ready for its defence. His early training in a heathen city celebrated for its philosophical schools, had prepared him for such a service. "Certain of the Epicureans and of the Stoics"—two sects of widely diverse sentiments—encountered the apostle; glad, doubtless, of an opportunity to indulge their favorite practice of disputing, and anticipating an easy victory. Some of them regarded him with contempt as a mere "babbling;" others seem to have thought more seriously of his teachings. For some purpose respecting which commentators are not entirely agreed, they took him to the summit of the rocky hill Areopagus, so called from the heathen god Mars, whose temple stood on its brow. This was the place for the meeting of the highest court of the Athenians. "The judges sat in the open air, upon seats hewn out in the rock, on a platform, which was ascended by a flight of stone steps immediately from the Agora," or market-place. From the spot chosen for his address, some suppose he was tried on the charge of introducing foreign gods into the city, Acts 17 : 18—a charge for which, several centuries

before, the philosopher Socrates was there condemned to death. Others, with more probability, suppose that they merely wished to hear him further respecting the new theories he had broached, and that Mars' hill, one of the highest points in the city, was selected both for its seclusion from the bustle of the Agora and its fitness to secure thoughtful attention to his discourse.

From this elevated position was spread out before him the most splendid array of temples, statues, and the varied works of the chisel and pencil ever presented at one view on earth. All that ingenuity, art, wealth, and superstition could effect for the worship and honor of false gods, was here assembled. Here, too, were the most acute and best trained minds of the ancient world. But the courage and the purpose of the apostle wavered not. Tried as a criminal, or listened to as a propounder of new doctrines, he was equally self-possessed. He kept back no truth through fear of losing the favor of his judges or obstructing his own popularity. He was to speak in behalf of the Almighty, to defend the honor of the God of Israel. But though zealous and intrepid, he was not rash. He would not prejudice his cause by needlessly reproaching his hearers. He aimed at the outset to gain their good will, saying, in substance, "Ye men of Athens, all things I behold bear witness

to your carefulness in religion. For as I passed through your city and beheld the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with this inscription, '*To the unknown God.*' Whom therefore ye worship, though ye know him not; whose wrath, from a bare suspicion of his existence and power to do evil, ye would deprecate; whose favor, from a bare suspicion of his power to confer benefits, ye thus publicly seek to win; 'him declare I unto you.'" This introduction would conciliate his audience, and free him from the odium of setting forth new gods.

With equal address, the apostle approached the subjects of the unity of the Godhead and of idol-worship, which one might think he could not touch without exciting the rage of the ignorant part of his hearers. Standing close by the temple of Mars, with the sanctuary of the Furies immediately below him, and the Parthenon of Minerva, the pride and boast of the Athenians, facing him above, he proclaimed with a firm though feeling voice, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath

determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'” The colossal statue of Minerva,* the guardian deity of the city, towered in full view above all the buildings of the Acropolis, armed with spear, shield, and helmet—but fearlessly appealing to the common-sense of his hearers, he went on to say, “Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device.”

Thus far, the philosophers of both sects in his audience would be pleased with some portions of his address. The Epicureans, who held that the gods do not concern themselves with human affairs, would be gratified by his assertion that the Deity needs nothing of man. But their satisfaction would be checked by his claiming for the Deity the creation and government of the world, which they regarded as originating in a fortuitous concurrence of atoms, and as governed by blind chance. The Stoics, too, who “condemned the worship of

* Formed of the *brazen* spoils of the battle of Marathon.

images and the use of temples," would be drawn towards Paul when he disapproved such an employment of material objects in seeking communion with the Deity ; but, holding that fate or destiny overrules all, they were as averse as the Epicureans to the sentiment that the world is under the providence of a personal God. Neither of these sects would be any better pleased with the apostle's address, when pressing the admonition that all, the wise as well as the ignorant, should repent and reform their lives, because a day of reckoning is at hand, and a higher court than that of the Areopagus in whose presence they were now standing, would decide the destinies of the whole human race on the eternal principles of right. Of this God had "given assurance unto all" in raising Jesus Christ from the dead. The doctrine of the resurrection was more than they could bear. It seemed to some of them only a ridiculous fancy of the speaker, and they openly derided him. Others, with more courtesy, said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." A few, among whom was one of the Areopagite judges, believed. As the mass of his hearers rushed down the steep hill into the Agora, to renew their mocking in the "market-place," or in the schools of philosophy near by, how bitterly would the apostle feel that the doctrine of salvation through the "cross of Christ,"

was "to the Greek foolishness." In no part of his experience was he more painfully taught the truth, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." The church at Athens, the centre and soul of ancient philosophy, was long feeble, and never assumed an eminent position. Little was found there to nourish the humble spirit of Christianity, which thrives but poorly in the chill shade of "falsely-named knowledge."

How long after this Paul continued at Athens, the history does not state. Nothing requires us to suppose that he closed his work there with this address. But though he spent two years almost in sight of the city, he does not appear to have made it another visit.

His next place of labor was the city of Corinth, which he might reach by two short days' journey by land, or a few hours' sail with a fair wind across the Saronic gulf to Cenchrea. At Corinth he was rejoined by Silas and Timothy. It does not appear whether the former was with Paul in Athens. From 1 Thess. 3 : 1, it seems that Timothy had been dispatched by the apostle to Thessalonica. Some suppose this was before Paul left Berea, when he found he could not himself return to that city. Others think that after rejoining Paul at Athens, Timothy was sent back by him to Thessalonica.

CHAPTER XII.

PAUL AT CORINTH—WRITES FIRST AND
SECOND THESSALONIANS.

CORINTH, where Paul now spent a year and a half or two years, is situated on an isthmus about three miles wide in its narrowest part, connecting the Morea with the continent. A fortified wall once extended across the isthmus. The Corinthian gulf on the west opens into the Adriatic, the Saronic gulf on the east, into the Aegean. Corinth had three harbors, Lecheum on the western side of the isthmus, a mile and a half from the city, Cenchrea on the eastern side, nearly nine miles from the city, and Schoenus on the narrowest part of the isthmus, a few miles north. Cenchrea was the largest of the three. Within the walls of the city was the Acrocorinthus, or citadel, an abrupt rock rising two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and throwing its shadow alternately from one gulf to the other. From its summit the Acropolis of Athens is in plain sight at the distance of forty-five miles. As the circumnavigation of Cape Malea, at the southern part of Greece, was dangerous, the commerce of the eastern and western divisions of the Roman empire flowed through the

streets of Corinth, in passing to and from the metropolis of the world. At the same time Corinth commanded the land traffic between the northern and southern parts of Greece.

The consul Memmius, by order of the Roman senate, destroyed Corinth one hundred and forty-six years before Christ, but it was rebuilt and beautified by Julius Cæsar. It was a colony, and the residence of the Roman proconsul of Achaia, a province "nearly coextensive with the kingdom of modern Greece." The basis of its population were freemen from Italy, but colonists from all quarters became residents of a city so admirably adapted to commercial purposes. "In no part of the Roman empire were both the inhabitants and the travellers so various and mingled. Wealth flowed into its bosom from two seas, and it was furnished with all the accommodations, elegances, and superfluities of life." Its merchants were opulent, and their prodigality made the place proverbially expensive. Its inhabitants were voluptuous and corrupt to the extremest degree of heathen depravity, and profligacy and Corinth were words of almost the same meaning: The Isthmian games, which were celebrated in the vicinity, increased the opulence and luxury of the city. Architecture and the other arts were cultivated here with great success, and schools of philosophy and

rhetoric abounded, where "the Greeks" sought "wisdom" with a proud self-sufficient temper which was almost sure to lead them astray. Still, the mercantile rather than the philosophic spirit predominated at Corinth, and with all its luxury and corruption of morals, its diversified busy population presented a more promising field for the labors of the apostle than he found at Athens.

Paul entered Corinth alone. He was not even attended by any of his converts. His spirit seems to have been depressed, partly perhaps by anxiety respecting his converts in Macedonia, 1 Thess. 3: 1-8, and partly by the chilling reception given to the publication of the gospel at Athens. He had not lost his faith in its power over the human mind, but from his late experience he must have had a keener sense of the hostility with which it was regarded by the cultivated heathen. What to his own heart was unspeakably dear, as "the wisdom of God and the power of God," he found them turning from with contempt. He felt, too, more deeply how vain are all efforts to convert men from sin and error without the power of the Holy Ghost. The result of his labors among the philosophers at Athens led him to look with less hope for success among those distinguished by human culture and rank. He now turned his attention more directly to the lower classes, who, if

ignorant and degraded, would be less exposed from pride of opinion to resist the gospel. To these he announced in simple but earnest words a Redeemer who had died for the sins of men, with the doctrines clustering around this grand fact. 1 Cor. 2:1-5.

Providence had secured a resting-place for the apostle at Corinth, in a friendly family of his own nation. Soon after his arrival he "found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla." The Jews had been expelled from Rome a short time before by the Emperor Claudius, and they would not fail to seek refuge in a place possessing so many commercial facilities as Corinth. Doubtless, many of this class of his countrymen were gathered there while Paul was in the city. Aquila was a tent-maker, and perhaps a large manufacturer, in the same business by which Paul obtained his support. When he received the apostle into his family, he was not probably a Christian, for the bond that first united them appears to have been not a common religion, but a common trade. For a while Paul was employed during the week in tent-making. On the Sabbath he "reasoned in the synagogue," endeavoring to persuade both Jews and Greeks that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. But while he wrought as diligently as

others at his manual occupation, his tongue would disclose to his fellow-workmen, and to all with whom he came in contact, the feelings which were uppermost in his heart. They would not long be in doubt in regard to his religious sentiments. Paul could not move among his associates without leaving traces of his influence. They would not be able to say, as some might say after mingling with others for months in the daily pursuits of common life, that they did not know from any thing he had said or done whether he was a follower of Jesus. He did not remember his Master in the synagogue, and forget him in the toils and perplexities of business, or in the relaxation and pleasures of social scenes. His daily life was an effective illustration of the gospel. Hence we are not surprised to find both Aquila and Priscilla converts to the Christian faith. How many of his shop-mates were the seals of his zeal and fidelity while he "labored, working with his own hands," 1 Cor. 4 : 12, will be known at another day.

The apostle seems to have continued in the family of Aquila during his abode at Corinth, and when they changed their residence to Ephesus,* Acts 18 : 18, he went with them on his way to Jerusalem. At Ephesus, these friends of Paul, in-

* "The nature of Aquila's business led him frequently to change his place of residence."

spired with his spirit and profiting from his instructions, became teachers of Christianity to Apollos, a learned and eloquent Jew of Alexandria, who was but imperfectly acquainted with its principles. They afterwards returned to Rome, Rom. 16 : 3, and through their hospitable warm-hearted treatment of the apostle, have "obtained a good report" which will be as enduring in the churches as his writings.

At length, to the great joy of the apostle, Silas and Timothy returned from Macedonia and rejoined him at Corinth. Animated with their presence and the account they brought of the "faith and charity," 1 Thess. 3 : 6, of the churches he had formed in that region, he was inspired with new ardor in publishing the gospel, Acts 18 : 5. As in the case of Jeremiah, "the word" in the heart of Paul was now "as a burning fire shut up in his bones." He was "weary with forbearing," and in face of the opposition which began to manifest itself, he boldly "testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ." When they organized a systematic resistance and assailed him with bitter revilings which left no hope of doing them good, he shook his garments against them* as a denunciation of woe, and declared himself pure from their blood, if hatred of the truth proved their ruin.

* See volume 10, p. 225 of this series.

Leaving the synagogue, he entered into the house of a Jewish proselyte named Justus, which was near by, and there publicly taught the Gentiles. Many of the Corinthians believed, and were baptized. Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, with all his household, received the gospel, and when he was baptized by the hands of Paul himself, the Jews would be still more exasperated at his defection. A storm of no common severity was about to burst on the head of the apostle. Ordinary occasions do not require the special intervention of Providence; but Paul was warned in a night vision to stand his ground firmly, with the assurance that no onset should be to his hurt, and that he must yet reap a rich harvest in the city. Trusting in the promise, and cheered by the prospect of success, he continued for a year and six months to teach the Corinthians "the word of God."

About this time a new proconsul, Anneus Gallio, a brother of Seneca the philosopher, arrived at Corinth. Distinguished for sweetness of disposition and popular manners, he was universally esteemed. The Jews, hoping probably that his complying temper would readily yield to their importunity, rose up in a body against Paul, and arraigned him before his tribunal on the charge of teaching men to worship God contrary to their law. The

Roman government allowed them to enjoy their own religious institutions without molestation, and "they inferred that whoever caused divisions among them by propagating doctrines opposed to their own principles was liable to punishment." But the proconsul would not trouble himself about their religious controversies, which he regarded as idle disputes about words. The easy temper on which they reckoned for carrying their point, indisposed him to take part in such a matter, and he would not sanction their proceedings even by hearing Paul defend himself from the charge. Telling the Jews they must settle their religious difficulties among themselves, and that he would have nothing to do with such a matter, he sternly repelled them from "the judgment-seat." This rebuff, so little in unison with his well-known reputation for gentleness, indicated a strong disapproval of their conduct, and encouraged the Greeks and other bystanders to indulge their hatred against the Jews. Rushing upon Sosthenes, who probably was the successor of Crispus as "chief ruler of the synagogue," and had on this occasion been most active against Paul, they beat him before "the judgment-seat" in the very presence of the proconsul. "But Gallio cared for none of these things." He took no notice of the unlawful violence. It seemed to him a small matter. He probably deemed both Jews

and Christians as deluded fanatics. But his conduct on this occasion has left a blot on the fair character accorded to him in profane history, and made his name even to this hour another term for weak or guilty indifference to religious things. With all his amiableness and honesty, from "philosophical scepticism or political contempt," he regarded the affairs of religion as of little consequence compared with the affairs of state. How many politicians since his day have fallen into the same mistake, and left a like unenviable reputation. "Gallio, like his brother, was put to death by the murderous Nero."

Soon after his arrival at Corinth, Paul wrote his *first epistle to the Thessalonians*. It was occasioned by the report which Timothy, on his recent return from Macedonia, brought respecting the condition of the church at Thessalonica. This is the earliest of his epistles embodied in the sacred canon. The apostle wished to express his affection for his Thessalonian converts from whom he had been abruptly separated, to confirm their faith, and to correct some errors into which they had fallen. The most prominent of these arose from a misapprehension of his teachings while among them respecting the second coming of Christ. So early was this an agitating topic in the church. "Many of the new converts were uneasy about the state of relatives or friends

who had died since their conversion, 1 Thess. 4:13. They feared that these departed Christians would lose the happiness of witnessing their Lord's second coming, which they expected soon to behold." Others, from this expectation, seem to have neglected the business of their proper callings, and to have brought reproach on the gospel.

After a few months and while still at Corinth the apostle found it necessary to write a *second* epistle to the Thessalonians. The excitement on the subject of our Lord's second advent was increasing. As in later days when the same topic has been agitated, some gave themselves up to delusion, and forsook their employments, anticipating that "the day of Christ was at hand." Some seem to have claimed spiritual communications in support of this notion. Some suppose that a letter had been forged in the name of Paul to the same effect, 2 Thess. 2:2; and the statement of the apostle, 2 Thess. 3:17, that his autograph was a mark of his genuine letters, gives countenance to this opinion.

Paul had now a desire to visit Jerusalem, and to be present at one of the great festivals, "probably the Pentecost." This was doubtless the principal object of his journey. He wished to avoid, so far as he could consistently, any ground for the Jewish Christians to regard him as hostile to the relig-

ion of their fathers. "To the Jews" he would become "a Jew." The first Christians observed the same festivals as the Jews, and those who were of Jewish descent continued the observance for a considerable time. They gave, it is true, a higher and more spiritual meaning to their celebration. Preparatory to his departure, he took leave of the assembled church. It was an occasion of deep solemnity when, after so long a residence among them, he bade them farewell. All of them, probably, were well known to the apostle, and most of them he could call his own children in the faith. He had joyed with them in the gush of their "first love," counselled them in their perplexities, encouraged them in their despondency, and admonished them when ready to halt or go out of the way. Would they share still his heart and his thoughts while weighed down by the cares and struggling with the difficulties and dangers everywhere besetting his path in the fulfilment of his apostleship? Would he still have a place in their affections and prayers while laboring in other lands; and at some distant day, should he revisit Corinth, would they gather around him and with one accord acknowledge him as their beloved teacher and friend? Or did imagination now seem to hear the outgoings of division echo, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas?" Paul well knew

that, from the great influx of strangers into Corinth, the church in that city would be specially exposed to be split into parties, through diversities in taste and sentiment.

At Cenchrea, the port where he embarked for Syria, the apostle cut off his hair, to show, according to Jewish custom, the termination of a vow under which he had bound himself. The nature of his vow on this occasion is uncertain.

Stopping a short time at Ephesus, he discussed the claims of Christianity in the synagogue with so much acceptance that the Jews requested him to prolong his stay. But promising as the field was, he declined the invitation, for his heart was set on keeping the coming feast at Jerusalem. He told them, however, that if such was the will of God, he would make them another visit. From Ephesus he sailed to Cesarea, and went up, Acts 18 : 22, as most commentators suppose, to Jerusalem. Whether he arrived in season for the festival, we are not informed; but he could not have done so, unless the weather was specially favorable. The historian merely says that "having gone up and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch." With the hostility of the unbelieving Jews against him as a renegade from their religion, and the suspicion and coldness with which many Jewish Christians at the head quarters of Judaism regarded him, for ele-

vating the Gentiles to a level with the chosen people, he could scarcely have been present at the Pentecost without exciting discussion, if not tumult, that would have received at least a passing notice. It was probably in the summer of A. D. 54, that Paul made this visit—his last, so far as we know—to Antioch.

CHAPTER XIII.

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY TOUR—PAUL AT
EPHESUS.

THE apostle remained "some time," perhaps till autumn, in Antioch. In the opinion of many critics, it was during this interval that Peter came down to Antioch, and the scene occurred which we have noticed on a previous page of this volume ; but from the narration in the epistle to the Galatians, it is most natural to infer that the meeting of the two apostles at Antioch took place soon after the assembly at Jerusalem. Barnabas, too, was with Paul when Peter was at Antioch, but as already remarked, there is no intimation in the sacred record, unless in this place, that they met on earth after their separation on account of Mark.

Paul now began a third missionary tour through the interior of Asia Minor to confirm the disciples in the faith. He probably went first to Tarsus, his native city, and thence in a north-western direction through Galatia. Then turning to the south-west, he came down to the sea-coast at Ephesus. Silas, his companion on the former tour, it is thought remained behind in Jerusalem, of which

church he was a prominent member when first brought to our notice. Timothy was with Paul two years after at Ephesus, and doubtless attended him on his journey through the interior of Asia to that city. In what manner the apostle was greeted by other churches on this journey, we have no intimation; but from his letter to the Galatians, written two or three years afterwards, we may infer that they received him with great cordiality, Gal. 4:18. The defection from the faith, and the change of feeling towards himself, which he taxes with some severity in that epistle, were as unsuspected as dispiriting; though the expression, "Am I become your enemy by speaking the truth among you?" seems to imply that he had found it necessary to censure some evils among them, which cooled the ardor of their attachment. Knowing how insidious and untiring was the Judaizing spirit, he would put them on their guard against its inroads. He kept in mind, also, a favorite object which had been agreed upon between him and the apostles at Jerusalem, Gal. 2:9, 10, and prompted the churches among the heathen to contribute for the poor Christians in that city. The rule which he now established among the Galatians, and afterwards in the church at Corinth, was for each member to lay aside on "the first day of the week" for this purpose, "as the Lord had pros-

pered them," a sum proportioned to their ability.
1 Cor. 16 : 2.

Paul did not enter the city of Ephesus as he entered Athens and Corinth, a lone stranger. He came invited and well known, and had no reason to doubt that he should meet a hearty reception from his countrymen, and find a pleasant home with his tried friends Aquila and Priscilla. 1 Cor. 16 : 19. These latter, as we have seen, had not forgotten the gospel while engaged in their worldly calling; and they would eagerly recount to the apostle their success in equipping the well-trained Apollos for the Christian warfare. They were not public teachers, but their conversation and influence would keep alive the interest concerning the Messiah, which had been awakened by Paul. Apollos, too, when more fully instructed in the gospel, would at Ephesus, as afterwards at Corinth, pour forth his glowing, powerful eloquence in exhibiting the proof from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

The Jews had for a long time inhabited in great numbers the cities of Asia Minor, and many of them were opulent. Augustus had secured them liberty of religious worship, ordered the cities in that region to protect them, legalized the transmission of tribute to the temple at Jerusalem, and made the plunder of their synagogues sacrilege.

There were doubtless many Jews at Ephesus. Among them Paul found "about twelve," probably strangers lately arrived in the city, whose knowledge of the gospel, like that of Apollos, was limited to the teachings of John the Baptist. They were in Palestine during his ministry and had received his baptism, but appear to have kept up so little intercourse with the mother country as to be almost or entirely ignorant of the promulgation of Christianity. They readily believed the instructions of Paul, and were baptized by him or by his order "in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Paul returned to Ephesus at the urgent solicitation of the Jews, but after he had for three months reasoned with them in the synagogue on the claims of the gospel, and sought to persuade them to embrace it, the hostility everywhere exhibited by his countrymen, when they fully apprehended his message, broke out here in its usual form. They hardened their hearts against the truth, and not content with casting contempt on it themselves, sought its rejection by the heathen. Attempts to win men by argument and persuasion to receive truth against which preconceived opinions or prejudice close their minds, are generally fruitless. Paul did not modify his preaching and hold back offensive portions of his message to calm their hostility, but retired with his converts to an apart-

ment occupied at other hours by one Tyrannus, "probably a teacher of philosophy or rhetoric." Here, for the space of two years, he daily exhibited the principles of the gospel, following up his public ministrations by visits "from house to house," Acts 20 : 20, and earnestly pressing both Jews and Greeks by personal appeals to exercise "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." By these unwearied, tearful labors he formed a large church at Ephesus ; while throughout the whole province of proconsular Asia multitudes became acquainted with the gospel, either through their own visits to the metropolis for commercial and religious purposes, or through missionary excursions of the apostle himself and his converts into the surrounding country. In addition to the exhausting toils of his public ministry, sufficient one would think to break down the strongest constitution, Paul devoted many hours to manual labor, probably as at Corinth in connection with Aquila, for the supply of his own necessities and those of his attendants, Acts 20 : 34 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 11, 12.

While pursuing his work at Ephesus, Paul met with violent and dangerous opposition. The particular form it took, except in a single instance, the history does not specify. He speaks of it in one of his epistles, 1 Cor. 15 : 32, as fighting with

wild beasts. The special miracles which he was empowered at this time to work, Acts 19:11, show that he was environed by special difficulties. Real miracles are not wrought on light occasions. Handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched the body of Paul, when applied to the sick, removed their diseases and caused evil spirits to come out of them. This particular form of miracle was adapted to the state of public feeling in Ephesus. That city was the seat of heathen magic. On the statue of the goddess Diana were engraven mysterious symbols, which, when pronounced, were regarded as a charm, and were directed to be used specially by those who were in the power of evil spirits. When written, they were used as amulets. "The study of these symbols was an elaborate science, and books, both numerous and costly, were compiled by its professors." Some travelling Jewish exorcists were at this time in Ephesus, who pretended that they could cast out evil spirits by means of certain arts which they derived from king Solomon. These men, taking Paul for a more powerful enchanter than themselves, who actually performed what they effected only in appearance, undertook to cast out evil spirits by pronouncing over the possessed the name of Jesus as a charm. Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew and a priest of the higher class, made such an attempt

and were justly repaid for their rashness. Impelled by the evil spirit, the man, crying out, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" rushed on them with frantic violence, and drove them from the house "naked and wounded." The impression from this incident was deep and general among both Jews and Greeks throughout the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Fear fell upon those who had been dupes to these superstitious practices, and even the sorcerers themselves in consternation renounced their magic arts, and publicly burnt the books that contained their mystic formularies. They followed the convictions of their conscience and abandoned their unholy employments, sacrificing not only large gains, but a large amount of property.* If this shows the power of the gospel, the incident now to be noted shows the power of depravity in the human heart.

After the apostle had for more than two years published the gospel at Ephesus, it had wrought so great a change in the sentiments and habits of the people, that private interests began to be irritated by its influence, as had been the case on a smaller

* If the "fifty thousand pieces of silver," Acts 19:19, were *Attic drachms* worth fifteen cents each, the value of the books was \$7,500. If they were, as some suppose, *shekels*, the value would be four times as great.

scale at Philippi. Some who cared little about Paul or his preaching, so long as he seemed to aim only at the introduction of a new religion, were violently excited against both when they felt practically that he was undermining the foundation of their gains. They would probably have had no great objection to exchange the worship of Diana for that of Jehovah, if the latter had been equally gainful. But when they perceived that Paul was turning many not only in Ephesus, but in all the province of Asia, to a religion which forbade image-worship, they became enthusiastically jealous for "the great goddess Diana, and the image which fell down from Jupiter."

The temple of Diana at Ephesus, as already stated, was one of the seven wonders of the world. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty broad, and supported by one hundred and twenty-seven columns, each of which had been contributed by some prince. The columns were sixty feet high, and thirty-six of them richly carved. The temple was the pride of the city, and the Ephesians were ever adding to its decorations statues and pictures by the most famous artists. Probably "there was no religious building in the world, in which was concentrated a greater amount of admiration, enthusiasm, and superstition." Persons from all quarters visited the city,

to view the magnificence of the temple, and both religion and interest united to render it dear to the Ephesians. It was peculiarly dear to one class of the people, the craftsmen who "made silver shrines for Diana." These were "small portable images, resembling the temple at Ephesus, and containing a figure of the goddess. They were set up in houses as objects of worship, or carried about the person, as having the supposed power to avert diseases and other dangers. They were not only sold here in Asia, but sent as an article of traffic to distant countries."

As Paul intended to remain at Ephesus "till Pentecost," 1 Cor. 16 : 8, it has been conjectured that the occurrence now to be noticed took place in May. The whole of this month was consecrated at Ephesus in honor of Diana, and games were held there, at which men, women, and children in great crowds gathered from all directions. The dealers in silver shrines of the goddess would be careful to have a good stock on hand, to meet the demand anticipated on such an occasion. But the trade for some reason was not as brisk as usual. Demetrius, who seems to have been a wholesale dealer in these articles, saw that the trade was beginning to fall off. He was not slow to investigate the matter, and he soon found it was owing to the preaching of Paul. Like many at the present day

whose business is similarly affected, he did not set himself to inquire whether what Paul preached was true and right and for the public good ; it was enough for him to see that it clashed with his business in making shrines for Diana. As for its effect on others, that was none of his concern ; he was not his "brother's keeper." Every man must take care of himself. It was not his business to see what effect the shrine had on the buyer. If he only got his pay, he should not trouble himself about the buyer or the public. No one had any right to intermeddle with his employment ; it was pursued long time ago, and none but bigots and hypocrites would now call it in question. It was, too, he argued a great benefit to the city. It brought a great many strangers and a great deal of money to Ephesus. In fact, but for the worship of the great goddess Diana, and the business connected with it, Ephesus would soon be nothing more than a provincial town !

There were others of the same occupation in the city equally religious just now, and patriotic with Demetrius. Gathering these together, he addressed them in a speech admirably adapted to work on their selfishness and what they had of religious feeling, and which might be a model for those in every age whose employments are curtailed or ruined by the progress of sound principle and mo-

ality. The arguments of combinations in any age to oppose measures or laws which conflict with occupations hurtful to the public welfare, may easily be deduced from this address of the Ephesian silver-smith to his fellow-craftsmen. Selfishness, city pride, the names of liberty, the charge of bigotry, religion itself, can readily be pressed into their service by men who "call evil good" if it promotes their gains, and "call good evil" when it checks their pestiferous pursuits.

The cry of the enraged artisans, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," resounding through the streets, threw the whole city into confusion. Seizing Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's companions in travel, they rushed into the theatre, "because it was the custom of the Greeks to use their theatres for public business as well as for sports." The theatre at Ephesus was built on the side of a lofty hill, seat after seat rising in long succession one above another, and the whole open to the sky. It is estimated to have been capable of containing thirty thousand persons. The temple of Diana could be seen from it, at no great distance. Its ruins are "a wreck of immense grandeur."

Paul, at the time of the assault on his companions, may have been absent from his abode.* Anx-

* We have no reason to doubt that, during his residence at Ephesus, he made his home with his old friends Aquila

ious on their account, he was about pressing into the theatre among the infuriated mob—hoping, perhaps, that his appearance would allay the tumult, or willing, at the risk of his own life, to divert their fury from his friends. But his disciples, who were doubtless Ephesians, and knew the disposition of their countrymen on such occasions, kept him back from his purpose. “Certain of the chief men of Asia”* also, who were friendly to Paul, sent him an urgent message not to venture into such a scene of confusion and violence.

The discordant cries of the surging multitude, the greater part of whom were ignorant of the real and Priscilla. The mob, disappointed in not finding Paul, would be apt to wreak their vengeance on his entertainers. It has been suggested that this is the occasion to which he refers, Rom. 16:4: “Greet Aquila and Priscilla, who for my life laid down their own necks;” that is, screened him from the mob who rushed to their door shouting, “*Ad leones*”—“*To the lions.*” See 1 Cor. 15:32.

* Ten men, called *Asiarchs*, or “chief men of Asia,” were chosen annually from the principal towns in proconsular Asia, to preside over the games, held every year in honor of the gods and of the Roman emperor, and to provide for these exhibitions at their own expense. They were of course chosen from among the wealthiest citizens, as they received no compensation for their services, and were required, for the amusement of the people and their own credit, to expend large sums. They were held in high distinction. When presiding at the games, they were robed in mantles of purple, and crowned with garlands.

cause of the gathering, continued to rend the air. The Jews, fearing that the mob would confound them with the adherents of Paul, thrust forward Alexander, one of their number, to shift the blame from themselves upon the Christians. But the mob were in no state of mind to make nice distinctions. Jew or Christian, Alexander was equally an enemy of their gods ; and all his efforts to gain a hearing were lost. The phrenzied mass shouted, "about the space of two hours," "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and the steep rocky side of the theatre reverberated the sound through the agitated city. At length, when the tempest of their rage and fanaticism had spent its force, the "town clerk"* addressed the multitude in a soothing speech. He praised the city of Ephesus as the far-famed "keeper"† of the great Diana—told them they need not fear that the teachings of a few in-

* The officer spoken of as "town clerk," in the common English Bible, was a magistrate of great authority, and in a high and very public position. "It was the title of the heads or chiefs of the municipal government. As magistrates, they took rank, it is said, next the proconsul."

† The word in Acts 19:35, translated "*worshipper*" in the common English Bible, means literally "*temple-sweeper*." It "was an honorary title granted to certain Asiatic cities, in recognition of the care and expense bestowed by them on the temple-worship of their favorite deities. It is found on coins of Ephesus struck about Paul's time."

significant strangers would do her worship any permanent injury—that Paul and his companions had not profaned her temple, or calumniated their goddess—that Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen could obtain redress from the civil courts for any wrong they had suffered; and finally, appealed to their fears by reminding them that by their tumultuous meeting, they had exposed their city to the displeasure of the Romans, who were ever jealous of popular commotions among the people of the provinces. He then dismissed the assembly. Thus, through the agency of heathen rulers, was the apostle again protected in a scene which threatened to terminate his life by violence.

CHAPTER XIV.

WRITES THE EPISTLE TO GALATIANS—FIRST AND SECOND CORINTHIANS—PLANS JOURNEY TO WESTERN EUROPE.

IN the early part of his residence at Ephesus, as many suppose, Paul wrote his epistle to the Galatians. Others think he wrote it at Corinth, after he left Ephesus, and about the time when he wrote his epistle to the Romans. The Judaizing teachers were making earnest and unscrupulous efforts to estrange the Galatian churches from Paul, denying his authority as an apostle, and endeavoring to persuade them to adopt the rites of Judaism. Already some of his converts had submitted to circumcision. They clung with characteristic levity to their new teachers, as eagerly as they had gathered around Paul. In his letter, he strenuously defends his authority against the attacks of these false apostles; asserts the freedom of the Gentiles from the yoke of the Mosaic ceremonial law; reproves the Galatians for their defection from the gospel as they heard it from his lips, and warns them that the doctrine of the Judaizers destroys the very essence of Christianity. Paul was severely tried both by the artifices and misrepresen-

tations of his adversaries, and by the sudden and unexpected alienation of his friends. His glowing temperament reveals itself in his notice of the one ; his tender yearning for the spiritual welfare of his converts, in his mingled commendations and reproofs of the other. His whole-hearted devotion to the cause in which he was engaged bursts forth in the sublime exclamation, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" his comprehensive charity, in the blessing he invokes on every subject of the "new creation"—"the whole Israel of God." Gal. 6 : 14-16. At the same time, his holding essential truth above all friendships, and every consideration even of peace, if it stands in the way of purity, gives an instructive example to the church in all ages. He was not kept back, by fear of disturbing its harmony, from declaring the true nature and tendency of the doctrine inculcated by the Judaizing teachers. They were undermining the foundations of the gospel, and though a lover of concord, he was more a lover of Christ.

Luke gives no intimation of such a journey, but Paul, during his residence at Ephesus, appears to have made a short visit to Corinth. Such a visit is inferred from several passages in his second epistle to the Corinthians. 2 Cor. 12 : 14, 21 ; 13 : 1. It was probably in the early part of his residence

at Ephesus. It appears to have been a painful and humiliating one to himself, on account of the flagrant sins of his converts, 2 Cor. 12 : 21, and the dishonor they had cast by their misconduct on the Christian name. From the epistles to the Corinthians, it is but too manifest that a considerable number of the converts were becoming affected with the licentiousness for which that city was so noted, and beginning to indulge in their old heathenish practices.

It is well known that apparent conversions among the heathen are not all real—that the missionary must expect some will, from various motives, profess to receive the gospel, who have never felt its saving power; and that others, who are really renewed by the Holy Spirit, will return for a season to their former customs, bringing reproach on the Christian name, and filling the heart of the missionary with sadness. Ignorant, in their heathenish state—familiar with vice, and scarcely knowing there is any distinction between it and virtue—their conscience not only untrained, but almost to be formed under Christian culture, they are easily deceived and “led captive by the enemy at his will.” The modern missionary may assuage despondency at the defection of his heathen converts, while remembering the experience of the apostle to the Gentiles. Who but the heavenly

"Comforter" could sustain Paul grieving over the blighted graces of those he had numbered among "the seals of his ministry?" As he thought of his watchful adversaries ready to take advantage of every opportunity to thwart his success and ruin his influence, what intense feeling would pervade the exhortation to the delinquent Corinthians: "Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

Near the close of his residence at Ephesus, Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. 1 Cor. 16:8. Not only were the immoralities just noticed still prevalent, but Paul had been informed, 1 Cor. 1:11, 12, that unworthy party divisions were rising in that church. After his departure from Corinth, other preachers followed, whose manner of exhibiting the gospel differing in some respects from his, gave occasion to discord. The larger portion of this church were Greeks, "a people naturally inclined to parties and party disputes." While some retained their preference for the teachings of Paul, others seem to have been enthusiastic in their attachment to Apollos. Eloquent, learned, and trained at Alexandria under the influence of Grecian literature, his mode of exhibiting Christian truth would be in strong contrast with the simplicity of style and doctrine which Paul, as

we have seen, thought proper to employ in addressing the masses at Corinth. Among the Jewish members of that church, the spirit of Judaism began to manifest itself in a party taking its name from Peter ; while others, from dislike of these party appellations, or from an arrogant rejection of all the apostles, professing to take their sentiments from Christ alone, without any human intervention, called themselves by his name. Paul censures all these divisions and this foolish preference of favorite teachers, as unworthy the privileges and destiny of those who are heirs to the untold "treasures of the church." "Therefore let no man glory in men : for all things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come ; all are yours : and ye are Christ's ; and Christ is God's."

The apostle points out some evils and abuses in the church at Corinth, which he urges them to rectify immediately. With great practical wisdom, he solves several questions they had proposed to him in reference to certain customs of a doubtful character. Though these questions relate chiefly to things of local and temporary interest, the principles which he unfolds in their solution are of unchanging value. The epistle furnishes an instructive view of the practical operation of the gospel on the human mind, under the administration of men taught

by the Holy Ghost. The very minuteness and seeming local character of many of the subjects discussed or referred to in the epistle, enhance its value. Though an outline of one church, it doubtless exhibits the general features of many other churches of that period in heathen lands. How surpassing human wisdom are the matchless sketch of charity—in which the Corinthians might by contrast see the ugliness of the disorders existing among themselves—and the sublime chapter on the resurrection.

While Paul was still in Ephesus, combating the "many adversaries" that were aroused by his successful labors—fully engrossed, as might be thought, with "the care of all the churches," and needing all his vigilance to escape the dangers which constantly beset his path, his active spirit was looking towards a wider and more distant field of toil. Having laid the foundation of the Christian church among the nations that used the Greek language, he had resolved on changing his sphere of action to the regions of the West. He longed to preach the gospel in the metropolis of the world, Rom. 1 : 11–16, and then to pass into Spain, Rom. 15 : 24, 2 Cor. 10 : 16, if not to the extremity of Western Europe. But he wished, before entering on the execution of this plan, to visit once more the churches in Macedonia and Greece, both to

strengthen them in the faith, and to give an impulse to the collection of their freewill-offerings for the poor saints at Jerusalem. For this purpose he had dispatched Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, Acts 19:22. Paul felt no common solicitude for the accomplishment of this object, not only from sympathy for his needy countrymen, and because he had long before, Gal. 2:10, pledged himself to a faithful performance of this duty, but because the liberality of the gentile churches, 2 Cor. 9:12-14, would check the alienation towards them which the spirit of Judaism was beginning to kindle among the Hebrew Christians.

His first intention was to go by sea directly to Corinth, and after a short visit there to pass into Macedonia—to return to Corinth; and from that city to be brought on his way to Judea, 2 Cor. 1:16. But to give the delinquent members of the Corinthian church a space for repentance after receiving the admonitions in his letter, that so he might not be constrained on his visit to exercise severity, 2 Cor. 1:23, he changed his purpose, and soon after the disturbance at Ephesus had ceased, set out on a tour to Macedonia, intending to go thence to Corinth. This gave the Judaizing party there occasion to insinuate that he was afraid to come to Corinth, and support by deeds the authority over them to which he made pretensions in his letters. 2 Cor. 1:17;

13:1-11. When he reached Troas, where he seems to have intended to gather a church, he found a great readiness among the people to listen to his message. But his spirit was oppressed. He expected to meet there Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth some time before to enforce the admonitions in his letter, aid in collecting the contributions for Palestine, 2 Cor. 8:6, and bring him information respecting the state of the church. He apprehended that his messenger had been detained by aggravated evils in the church, and his mind had no rest. 2 Cor. 2:12, 13. Promising as was the field at Troas, he hastened on his way to Macedonia with a heavy heart. This was probably in the spring, A. D. 57. Who were his companions on this journey, neither the narrative of Luke nor his own letters inform us; but as Tychicus and Trophimus, the latter, if not the former, an Ephesian, were with him at Corinth, and were his assistants at other times, it is probable that they accompanied him from Ephesus.

A thoughtful reader of the second epistle to the Corinthians, written during this journey through Macedonia, cannot fail to perceive that sorrow now cast deep shadows over the path of the apostle. He had reached Philippi, and found a welcome among his beloved converts, in his epistle to whom "we find no censure, and much praise"—whose un-

swerving affection, consistent piety, and abounding liberality, he could not think of without thanks to God. Phil. 1 : 3. Timothy, too, was now in his company, 2 Cor. 1 : 1, and Titus had rejoined him with an account, cheering in many respects, of the condition of the church at Corinth. But even when his heart pours forth its joy at the penitence and reformation wrought by his former epistle, the brief notes soon die away, and sorrow asserts its place in his soul.

A fresh onset seems to have been made at this period by the propagators of Judaism on the churches established by Paul. Even his favorite church at Philippi, though free as yet from the inroads of this error, not many years after needed the admonition referring to these teachers: "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision." These zealous partisans could not bear his doctrine, that under the gospel Jews and Gentiles were on a level as to religious rights and privileges. They regarded "the natural posterity of Abraham still as much as ever the theocratic nation, entitled to God's exclusive favor, to which the rest of mankind could only be admitted by becoming Jews." They regarded their Christian countrymen as differing from other Jews chiefly in recognizing Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Those of the party who were sincere in their belief, doubt-

less felt that Paul was injuring the cause of Christianity by admitting Gentiles to the church without passing through the forms of the law. They would justify their opposition to his efforts, and their assaults on his character, by thinking that his course prejudiced the Jews against Christianity, and prevented many of them from acknowledging the Messiahship of Jesus. That such a party should draw off many of Paul's converts, where the principles of the gospel had been unfolded by himself, is a mortifying proof that "men love darkness rather than light."

And yet there is nothing strange in this fact. It shows a state of things at that time like what has often since depressed the ministers of Christ. The overpowering influences of the Spirit which attended the first promulgation of the gospel in these churches, had been succeeded by coldness and declension, furnishing a natural soil for the growth of error. Some who had "run well," already stopping short in the race, retained little of Christianity but the name. Some had slackened in their zeal, though real converts. Others had lost sight of the great principle, "By grace are ye saved through faith," and began to rely, in part at least, on their own works for acceptance with God. They might retain a "form of godliness," either in an orthodox creed held only in the letter, or in

outward rites performed without corresponding affections. To persons of this stamp, especially if they had been trained in the observances of the Mosaic law, with false notions of their saving efficacy, the teachings of the Judaizers would be captivating. No wonder Paul should have occasion to say, "Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ."

Having reported to Paul the condition of the Corinthian church, Titus was sent back by the apostle to complete the collection for Palestine which they had begun a year in advance of the churches in Macedonia. He was accompanied by two brethren selected by Paul, and was the bearer of the *second epistle to the Corinthians*. Paul urges the members of that church to finish the work, lest his report to the Macedonians of the readiness of "Achaia" might seem an empty boast, 2 Cor. 9:1, 2. In his management of this collection, Paul shows that his ardor was tempered with prudence—that he was as practical as logical. He knew that his zeal in this matter might be misrepresented by his maligners, and that if they could discover the least pretext for accusing him of selfishness in pressing forward the contributions, or of fraud in their disbursement, they would not fail of the opportunity to blacken his character. He would not take charge

of the offering without the means of proving his fidelity in its application. He procured the appointment of a responsible person by the churches to attend him to Judea, and account to them for the distribution of the funds. His carefulness not to let his "good be evil spoken of," is worthy to be imitated by all who are charged with like trusts. The person delegated to go with Paul to Jerusalem accompanied Titus to Corinth. His "praise" was "in the gospel throughout all the churches," but who he was we can only conjecture. It may have been Luke. At any rate, it was one of those in Paul's company, Acts 20 : 4.

The mingling of commendation and reproof throughout this epistle, shows that though a great change had been wrought in the Corinthian church, there was still a minority of unscrupulous adversaries—questioning his apostleship, and resisting his authority. This compelled him, in proving the one, to use what he was afraid might seem the language of vanity, and in supporting the other, what in an ordinary case would appear undue severity. "I suppose I was not behind the very chiefest apostles," would not have been wrung from Paul without extremest pressure ; and of no common opposition would he declare, "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

Among many interesting details in Paul's history which the world owes to this wicked assault on his character, is the wonderful occurrence to which he seems reluctantly to allude, 2 Cor. 12 : 1-9, as if it might lay him open to the charge of indecorous glorying. About fourteen years before this epistle was written, Paul had in vision been "caught up to the third heaven." He was not conscious of external things, but what his precise state was at the time he could not tell; it was known to God only. However distinct and vivid the impression was on his mind, he could not describe it in mortal language; and if this were possible, it would not be lawful. The vision was designed for the personal comfort and support of Paul, probably in a time of trial and great danger,* not to gratify the idle, unholy curiosity of others. Apostle as he was, the contrast between himself and the pure spirits before the throne of God would humble him; but such is the strength of human pride that he might have been puffed up "beyond measure" by "the abundance of the revelations," if divine

* If the second epistle to the Corinthians was written A. D. 57, fourteen years previous Paul was laboring in "Syria and Cilicia," Gal. 1 : 21, where he "probably underwent the sufferings mentioned, 2 Cor. 11 : 24-26, namely, two of the Roman and five Jewish scourgings, and three shipwrecks."

wisdom had not by "a thorn in the flesh" checked the natural tendency of the heart to vaunting. Whatever this "thorn" was, it was a severe and abiding trial. Some think it was a bodily malady, which, if existing before, now pressed on him with augmented severity. It was hard to bear, and he "besought the Lord thrice" for its removal. But with true resignation he acquiesced in the denial of his request, when assured that if borne with cheerfulness, it would conduce to the honor of Christ. He would even "glory" in the opportunity to magnify the power of his Master in sustaining him patient and meek under the pains and reproaches caused by his "infirmities."

This is a harder lesson to learn and practice, especially for one of Paul's ardent temperament and love of activity, than to breast severe toil and appalling danger in the pursuit of an object which engrosses the soul. It is difficult for the sufferer to realize, that sweet submission to the divine will on the couch of pain and languishing, honors God as much as open-handed beneficence or self-denying labor in promoting his kingdom; that the world are more convinced of the celestial origin of Christianity by the exercise of the passive virtues, faith, patience, hope, under the depressing influence of a diseased body, of "months of vanity and wearisome nights," than by the highest deeds of daring

for truth and holiness. The latter, if they do not spring from earthly motives, at least fall in with the active impulses of our nature; the former find little congeniality in the unrenewed heart, and can flourish only under the culture of heaven.

After remaining a while longer in this region, and extending his tour to Illyricum, which lay on the north-western frontier of Macedonia, Rom. 15 : 19, Paul directed his course to Corinth.

CHAPTER XV.

WRITES THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS—COLLECTION FOR THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM.

THE apostle was now approaching the city of Corinth, which had been the centre of his thoughts and the chief source of his solicitude for many months. He had delayed his visit that his letters might have time to produce penitence in the sincere but erring members of that church, and to ripen the opposition and heresies of the false brethren, so that their true character could not be concealed, if it should be necessary to take decisive measures in checking their influence. He was now to see with his own eyes the party-divisions which he had learned only from the representations of others, and to hear with his own ears the denial of his apostleship, and the insinuations against his character which he had been aware of only from report. Now, too, he was to enforce the threatenings against the disobedient which his adversaries had openly boasted he dared not execute. He indeed came reluctantly to the task. He would gladly have saved both himself and them the necessity of discipline. "If I cause you grief, who is there that will cause me joy?" Some

of them, perhaps, thought that his heart would fail him if his courage held out, and that he would forbear through sympathy and love to proceed to extremities. Such, however, mistook the character of Paul. His firmness was tempered with mildness, but it was firmness still. He could not cut off even a false brother from the church with the satisfaction he felt in "hauling men and women to prison" in his persecuting zeal, but he could do it for the honor of Christ.

What measures he was constrained to adopt with the church at Corinth during this visit, neither sacred nor ecclesiastical history records. That church is not, after this time, ever noticed in the Acts or in the epistles. But we have no reason to doubt that such as he was "in word by letters" when absent, such he was "in deed" when present—that the incorrigible were severed from the church, perhaps with the display of miraculous power; and that there was, at least for a time, an increase of piety and harmony among its members, such as ever follows this painful work when performed on the principles of the gospel, and with the spirit of Christ. The church at Corinth became reformed from the gross immoralities rebuked in Paul's epistles, but the tendency to party spirit burst forth more furiously than ever a few years after his death.

Near the close of this visit to Corinth, where he remained three months, the apostle wrote his epistle to the Romans. About sixty-three years before Christ, Pompey conquered Judea, and sent many captive Jews to Rome. They were sold into slavery, but their unbending determination to keep the Sabbath and observe the rites and customs of the Mosaic law, made their services of little value to their masters, and a large body of them were liberated. The government assigned them a place opposite Rome, across the Tiber, where a town arose inhabited principally by Jews. After a while, some of the chief women of Rome became proselytes to the Jewish religion, and by degrees the men began to frequent their assemblies. Probably converts from the synagogue separating themselves from their unbelieving countrymen, as in other cities, were the original members of the church at Rome. It was founded at an early period, but by whom, history affords no certain evidence. Some suppose the gospel was first published in the metropolis of the Roman empire by the "strangers from Rome," Acts 2 : 10, who were converts on the memorable day of Pentecost. It may have been preached by converts from Palestine, who had come to reside at Rome, or by Jews, who, on visits from that city to Jerusalem, embracing Christianity, brought it back with them on their

return. The Romish church claim that Peter was the founder of the Christian community at Rome, but "it is nearly certain that Peter had not been there" when Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans. Whoever was the founder, a considerable portion of the church at that time were of Jewish origin.

From the salutations in the epistle, Paul appears to have had not a few personal friends in Rome, some of whom, before their removal to that city, had shown him acts of kindness; others had labored with him in the gospel, or been his fellow-prisoners, and at least one had embraced Christianity under his preaching, "the well-beloved Epenetus," his first convert in proconsular Asia. Here, too, were now Priscilla and Aquila, active as ever in their Master's cause, mingling a care for religion with their every-day business, and opening their house, perhaps their manufacturing establishment, in Rome, as before at Ephesus, for Christian assemblies, 1 Cor. 16:19. The apostle felt a deeper interest in this church from his purpose to visit it shortly in person. Phœbe, a deaconess* of the church at Cenchrea, in the neighborhood of Corinth, was

* As women among the Orientals were for the most part kept secluded in apartments to which strangers of the other sex had no access, it was important for the church to have deaconesses to attend to the wants of its sick and indigent female members.

about to embark for the metropolis, upon some private business. This gave him a favorable opportunity, while he recommended her to the care of the Christians at Rome, to address them a letter, reminding them, Rom. 15 : 14, 15, of the principles and rules of the gospel, and expressing, in advance of his appearance among them, his regard for their welfare.

Not only was Paul personally acquainted with many Christians at Rome, but he must have known well the general character of the church in that city, and its particular condition at the time he was writing. The communication between the metropolis of the empire and Corinth, where he formerly resided at least a year and a half, and where he had now been about three months, was easy and frequent. The mutual relation of the law and the gospel, the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations, would have often been the theme of his thoughts as apostle of the Gentiles. But the tendency to Judaism must at this time have impelled him to examine this relation with intense earnestness. It was not a matter of transient or local interest, but one involving the existence of the church. It would stand or fall according to the views held on this subject. He had already discussed it in his epistle to the Galatians, and he now resumed the discussion and pursued it more

thoroughly in the epistle to the Romans. Though the Christian Jews at Rome indulged the common prejudices of their nation against the Gentiles, and were attached to the observances prescribed in the Mosaic ritual, they appear to have been less inclined to Judaism than some other portions of their believing countrymen. Hence, we find in the epistle to the Romans none of that severity of rebuke which characterizes some parts of the epistles to the Galatians and Corinthians, among whom the Judaizing spirit was rife. The apostle seems to discuss the principles involved in the subject rather for general use in all ages, than to meet a particular state of feeling among the Christians at Rome, and to have addressed them not only to confirm them in the faith, but because his epistle would have a speedier and wider circulation, if directed to a church in that renowned and much frequented city. Rom.

1. 8.

We might expect to find his whole powers of logic and his deepest Christian feelings in the performance of such a service—that the argument would glow with the fervor of exhortation, and the exhortation be sent home to the heart with the resistless force of argument. Elevated, guided, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, he composed a treatise on the distinctive principles of the gospel, and their application to the practical duties of life,

with a power of reasoning, a richness of sentiment, and a ripeness of Christian experience, which make this part of revelation peculiarly attractive to the pious heart. With special reference to this epistle, Paul has been called the apostle of Protestantism. "Melancthon was so fond of it that he made it the subject of constant lectures, and twice copied it out with his own hand, as Demosthenes copied Thucydides," that he might drink more deeply into its spirit. Other epistles, written at a later period, when he terms himself "Paul the aged," may have somewhat more mellowness, but none appear so fully to combine the glow of Christian feeling with the vigor of perfect manhood.

After an appropriate introduction, the apostle affirms his readiness to preach the gospel at Rome. He was not ashamed of it, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." He shows that both these great divisions, embracing the whole human race, are under condemnation for sin: the Gentile, for transgressing the law of nature; the Jew, for transgressing a written law. Neither can be saved on the ground of their own obedience, since obedience, to be available for salvation, must be perfect. Both therefore need the gospel, through which God "has gratuitously given righteousness and blessedness to all who believe

in Christ." Thus *Christ is our justification*. After answering some objections, he proceeds in the sixth chapter "to exhibit *Christ our sanctification*." He shows that "the doctrine of gratuitous justification does not encourage sin;" but on the contrary, that it "affords men the only hope of their being able to subdue and mortify sin." He discusses various objections to the dealings of God with his creatures, in making some the subjects of his distinguished mercy and passing by others; shows that the Jews, if they remain in unbelief, must be cast off according to their own Scriptures—that their rejection will be made the occasion of a great blessing to the Gentiles—and that the final reception of the chosen people to God's favor will be, to those who still remain heathen, as "life from the dead." Then follow various precepts specially adapted to the state of the church he was addressing, but involving principles of morality applicable in every age of the world. They show his practical wisdom under the guidance of inspiration—that he was a keen observer of men, knowing their weaknesses, their temptations, their moral wants, and able with a masterly hand to adapt his instructions and admonitions to the peculiar character of every class.

Paul now turned his thoughts to the completion of his apostolic ministry at the East, by carrying to Jerusalem the collection which for more than a

year he had been urging onward among the gentile Christians of Asia Minor and Europe for the poor members of the church at Jerusalem. His object in this, as already noticed, was not merely to supply their necessities, though these were doubtless the more pressing in consequence of the hospitality they were obliged to exercise from the resort of Christian Jews to that city. He saw that the growing disaffection of the Judaizing party towards the Gentiles threatened to rend the churches he had formed, and he knew that nothing would so effectually close the chasm as the power of sympathy and love. If the church at Jerusalem accepted the gift cheerfully, it would seal a Christian brotherhood of Jew and Gentile, which prejudice itself could not sunder; while the consummation of his cherished scheme would redound to the glory of God, and the rapid extension of the gospel. His anxiety and his hope in regard to such a termination, he expresses in his epistle to the Romans: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together in your prayers for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed." Rom. 15: 30-32.

He would indeed come to them, but after a longer delay than he anticipated when he wrote the letter.

As Paul was about to embark at Cenchrea for some port in Syria, a conspiracy of the Jews, probably against his life, induced him to take his course northward by land to Macedonia, and sail from Philippi to Troas. "It is possible that the Jews intended to assault him on his way to the ship, or else to follow and capture him after putting to sea; and seizing on the funds of which he was the bearer, gratify both their hatred and their avarice." "And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus," Acts 20:4. Some of these at least were messengers bearing the gifts of the gentile churches to Jerusalem. Luke was with Paul at Philippi, Acts 20:6, and probably rejoined him in that city. The rest of the company went forward to await at Troas the arrival of Paul and Luke; who remained at Philippi till after the Passover. From the fact that Luke met Paul several times in this neighborhood, and once at Troas, on the other side of the Aegean, it has been conjectured that "his vocation as a physician may have brought him into connection with the contiguous coasts of Asia and Europe."

CHAPTER XVI.

PAUL AT TROAS—MILETUS—TYRE—CÆSAREA.

AFTER spending a week—"the days of unleavened bread"—among his beloved Christian friends at Philippi, Paul, with Luke and perhaps some others in his company, sailed for Troas. On his first visit to Europe, Acts 16:11, the passage was made in about two days. They were five days in accomplishing the present voyage. They tarried seven days at Troas. Paul would not for a slight motive delay his voyage, but as he had once been withheld by a vision from preaching the gospel here, and on a second visit had been constrained by his anxiety to see Titus to leave unreaped fields white for the harvest, he would hazard a late arrival at the Pentecost for the sake of instructing and encouraging the brethren in this city.

After they had enjoyed his services for several days, they assembled on the first day of the week for public worship. It was evening—the house was crowded, as we might expect it would be on such an occasion—and Paul, being about to depart on the morrow, perhaps never to meet his hearers again on earth, continued his address until midnight. The meeting was held in an upper

room. Oppressed with the heated atmosphere, his strength, too, not unlikely exhausted by high-wrought feeling, a young man named Eutychus sitting in a projecting window which opened upon the street, or the interior court of the house, sunk into a deep sleep during the prolonged discourse, and fell lifeless to the pavement. But Paul went down, and embracing the body as the prophet Elisha embraced the dead child of the Shunamite, said to the people, who, in the Oriental manner, were lamenting with violent outcries, "Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him." He returned to the chamber, and after partaking of some refreshment and celebrating the Lord's supper with the brethren, he continued his discourse even to the break of day. Taking leave of his friends, and no doubt enjoining on the grateful youth to employ well the powers so wonderfully restored, he set forward on his journey, intending to go on foot to Assos, about twenty miles distant, while his companions went by ship to that city.

Interesting as this passage of the sacred history is, as exhibiting a striking manifestation of divine power, it has a special interest in the evidence it affords that thus early the Christian church consecrated the first day of the week to commemorate the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the

first day of the week took place under the eye of the apostles, and was sanctioned by their authority. The change indeed was gradual. At first, the Jewish Christians observed both the seventh and first days of the week, just as they kept the Passover and celebrated the Lord's supper; but when the temple was left without one stone upon another, and the Jewish priesthood, altars, and sacrifices had disappeared, the Lord's day took the place of the Jewish Sabbath, and the first day took the place of the seventh, as a day of rest.

It is evident, from the language of the historian, that Paul was not accustomed to prolong his addresses. This was a special occasion, and he spoke long because he did not expect another opportunity. Religious services sometimes become profitless by too great length. Strong feeling soon exhausts the mind. Family devotions may be drawn out till children and domestics are inattentive and restless from mere fatigue; and thus what might be made the pleasantest moments spent under the paternal roof, binding the soul to God by the strong ties of household memories, may become tedious as they pass, and in future years be associated only with weariness and aversion.

Paul may have determined to go on foot to Assos, that he might employ, at Troas, a few hours more than the time for the vessel's sailing would allow,

and thus take advantage of the impression on the minds of the people from the recovery of the young man. Or as has been suggested by some, he might wish "to visit friends on the way, or to have the company of brethren from Troas, whom the vessel was not large enough to accommodate." There was a good Roman road between the two cities, and he may have wished, after the excitement and exhaustion of the previous week, to enjoy a few hours of solitary meditation "among the woods and streams of Ida."

Paul was anxious to arrive at Jerusalem in season for the Pentecost, which was seven weeks after the Passover, and he determined not to stop at Ephesus, lest he should be so long detained by the importunity of friends, or the state of the church, as to be too late for the festival. As they sailed along the coast in the neighborhood of a city where he had spent three years, the mind of the apostle must have teemed with memories both joyous and painful. Arriving at Miletus, he sent for the elders of Ephesus. The distance between the two cities was less than thirty miles. He could hope for a short interview at Miletus with the leading members of the Ephesian church, but if he had gone himself to Ephesus he might have been left behind by the sailing of the vessel in his absence. Some, however, suppose that he had control of its movements.

The elders joyfully obeyed the summons, and hastening "over or round" the intervening ridge of Mycale, met the apostle "probably in some solitary spot on the shore." It was about a year since he left Ephesus, and many inquiries would spring to the lips respecting the welfare of individuals ; but no time could be spent on minor matters, however dear to the heart of friendship. The church engrossed his feelings and demanded his care. Before him were its prominent men, and he would employ every moment in pouring into their bosoms his anxieties for its growth and purity. It was a father speaking to his children—an apostle commending his converts to those whom the Holy Ghost had made their overseers. He addressed them in tender and affecting words befitting such an occasion. With the freedom of one who was conscious of sincerity, he spoke of his labors at Ephesus, which, as they knew, had been performed in lowliness of mind, and tearful anxiety for their salvation. Amid trials arising from the plots of his own countrymen, he had not been deterred from urging, on both Jews and Gentiles, "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." And now, pressed in spirit, he was going up to Jerusalem to perform a service which he hoped would conciliate the Jews to the Gentiles, not knowing what would be the result, only that

wherever he came he was divinely warned that "bonds and afflictions" awaited him in that city. But he was ready to sacrifice life itself for "the gospel of the grace of God." Expressing his strong conviction that he should meet them no more in the flesh, he called them to witness that he had faithfully and fearlessly declared unto them the whole counsel of God, keeping nothing back which he thought would conduce to their advantage. He solemnly enjoined on them like fidelity in teaching and governing the church purchased with the Saviour's own blood. From divine suggestion, probably, as well as from observing the elements of character and opinion existing in that region, he foresaw that false teachers would soon make dangerous inroads on the church, and that some even of its own members would teach pernicious doctrines. Perhaps his sagacious mind discerned the seeds of error and division in the bosoms of some present who little suspected they were in danger of heresy. He commended them to the grace of God, which could preserve them in the path of truth and holiness. He pointed them to his personal sacrifices while preaching the gospel at Ephesus—uplifting, probably, his hands "marked with the traces of the toil to which they were inured." He urged the elders to a laborious, self-denying life, that they might relieve the wants of the poor,

or prevent suspicion that they were actuated by a mercenary spirit, and reminded them of the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Then kneeling down amidst the sorrowing group with whom he had often bowed before the mercy-seat, he poured forth his soul in a prayer of which the historian has left no sketch, but which, we may be sure, was fervid in supplication for the elders themselves, for the church under their care, for himself in the special work he had in hand, and for "the whole Israel of God."

But the friends must now separate, for the vessel was about to sail. With many tears the brethren fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, "sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." They attended him to the ship, and then in sadness retraced their steps to Ephesus; while the apostle pursued his course to the holy city, not knowing the things which should befall him there.

The voyagers pursued their course, passing by the islands of Cos and Rhodes, and stopping at Petara, a coast-town of Lycia in Asia Minor. Here they took another vessel bound to Phenicia. Passing south of the island of Cyprus, of which they had a distant view, they landed at Tyre, where the vessel was to discharge its cargo. The distance from Petara to Tyre is about four hundred

miles, and as the wind must have been fair to admit sailing in the direction they took, the voyage was doubtless speedily accomplished. The gospel was early published in Phenicia, Acts 11:19, and there were Christians in Tyre. Paul had probably visited the city on his way to the convocation at Jerusalem, Acts 15:3. He now sought out the brethren and abode with them a week, waiting probably for the sailing of the vessel. At Tyre he was again warned not to continue his journey to Jerusalem. When they could not prevail on him to change his purpose, the brethren with their wives and children attended him to the sea-shore, where they all knelt down and prayed together on the beach. The impressive scene would not soon fade from the minds of these children, and when ten years later some traveller from Rome reported at Tyre that the apostle had sealed his ministry with a martyr's blood, it would sadden their spirits while it strengthened their faith. The next day Paul and his company arrived at Ptolemais on the bay of Acre, eight miles north of mount Carmel. This ended the sea part of their journey.

The travellers stopped but one day at Ptolemais, and hastened forward by land to Cæsarea, from thirty to forty miles south. Paul had been in this city several times, and it was soon to become his

residence. Among the Christians of Cæsarea was Philip the evangelist, one of the seven chosen to distribute the alms of the church at Jerusalem. Acts 6:5. Paul and his companions lodged with him while they remained in the city. They were now but two days' journey from Jerusalem, and could spend some days in Cæsarea, without danger of failing to be present at the Pentecost. Unknown to himself, Providence may have given the apostle this opportunity to form friendships at Cæsarea, which would be of eminent service and comfort to him in the approaching hour of need.

While Paul was yet in Cæsarea, the prophet Agabus, doubtless the same whom we have had previous occasion to mention, came down from Jerusalem. Taking Paul's girdle and binding his own hands and feet, he said, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles." This was doubtless done by divine suggestion, but his knowledge of the state of feeling among the Jews of the metropolis, both Christian and unbelieving, may have given force to his conviction, and that of Paul himself, that what he uttered would prove true. But though the apostle's hope of success in his undertaking must have been damped by this vivid symbol, his resolution did not waver. He had counted

the cost. Neither the entreaties, nor the tears, nor the expostulations of his friends and of the Christians of Cæsarea, nor the full unveiling of the imminent danger, shook his purpose. "What mean ye," he asked, almost in reproof of their importunity, "to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Ceasing their efforts to persuade him to forego his purpose, they said, "The will of the Lord be done." Paul was ready to die, not merely for his faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah, but as "the apostle of the Gentiles," he was ready to die in defending their rightful claim to be "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God." If need be, he was ready to die to redeem the church from the Judaizing spirit, as well as to bear testimony by a martyr's sufferings that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah.

Paul and his companions now entered on the last stage of their journey, attended by some of the brethren from Cæsarea, who went along with them to Jerusalem, not only out of respect, but to take them to the house of one Mnason, a native of Cyprus, who was an early convert to Christianity, and as some think was a personal follower of Jesus.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAUL ARRESTED AT JERUSALEM—BEFORE
THE SANHEDRIM—CONSPIRACY.

THE reception of Paul by the Christians whom he met at the house of his venerable host was all he could wish. Himself and his companions were treated with cordiality, and he could not but entertain a hope that his visit would be crowned with a happy result. The next day, they met the presbyters or elders at the house of James, the brother or cousin of Jesus, who presided over the church at Jerusalem. None of the other apostles appear to have been present. If living, they were absent temporarily from the city—which at the festival would not be very probable—or they were laboring in foreign lands. Paul had long looked forward to this meeting with deep anxiety, and had doubtless often entreated the Head of the church, for the honor of his name, the peace and extension of his kingdom, to give it a prosperous issue. Having, with the deputies who accompanied him, given and received “the kiss of charity,” and presented the offerings of the gentile churches for the poor of Jerusalem, Paul related in detail what God had

wrought among the heathen through his ministry. This statement, verified by the liberal gifts, awakened deep feeling in the assembly ; for the moment, national jealousy was swallowed up in Christian love, and they broke forth in praise to God for these wonderful displays of his grace.

But the old Pharisaic spirit, though allayed, was still too strong to be overlooked in the measures which the assembly might adopt in reference to this visit of Paul and the messengers of the gentile churches. There were many thousands nominally Christian in Jerusalem, who were zealous for the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, who only knew "Christ after the flesh," and thought of him as "a Jewish Messiah." James and many of the presbyters doubtless had more correct and enlightened views, but in the transition state of that church they were obliged to consult the sentiments and feelings of this numerous class. Paul had been maligned by his bitter enemies, who charged him with teaching the Jews living among the heathen "to forsake Moses," and not to circumcise their children or observe the Jewish customs. This had excited strong prejudices against him at Jerusalem, and he would be jealously watched wherever he went. To remove these false impressions, the assembly advised an expedient, which at first view might seem scarcely con-

sistent with the teachings and character of the apostle to the Gentiles.

Four persons, Jews and probably Jewish Christians, had taken upon themselves the vow of a Nazarite. At the close of the period to which the observance of the vow extended, they would be bound to present themselves at the temple with certain offerings, Num. 6 : 13-15. These were beyond the means of the very poor. It was therefore regarded by the strict Jews as an act of great merit, for another to pay the necessary expenses; that thus the poor might accomplish their vows. The elders counselled Paul to pay the expenses of these four persons, that thus he might by an open act refute the charge of being a despiser of the law. He assented. Whether joining in their vow, according to some, or only assuming the expense of their offerings, according to others, he went with them into the temple, after the necessary purifications.

This he could do in entire harmony with the doctrines which he taught and with the course which he represents himself as pursuing on other occasions. There was nothing morally wrong in these ceremonies, so long as they were not relied on for salvation, or put in the place of faith in Christ for acceptance with God. They would pass away with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple,

and he would not hazard pulling up the wheat by too great haste in plucking up the tares. He would make every concession in minor matters to promote the salvation of men and prevent discord, so long as truth and holiness were left untouched. And as he could advise Timothy in compliance with Jewish prejudice to submit to a legal rite, and yet say to the Galatians, "If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing ;" so he could, in equal consistency with his teachings, adopt the expedient proposed by the elders of the church at Jerusalem. Paul's ready assent to the proposed expedient probably satisfied the larger part of the class in the church specially attached to the Jewish religion. He would be congratulating himself on success in healing the threatened schism between Jew and Gentile, and anticipating that a few days would find him on his way to Rome, in pursuance of his cherished purpose to spend the remainder of his life in western Europe, where the name of Christ was still unknown. But, as often occurs in human affairs, a sudden change came over the scene from an unlooked-for quarter. The skies whose morning was so bright were ere evening to be swept by a desolating tempest.

The Pentecost had attracted Jews from all parts of the world to the holy city, and the courts of the temple were crowded with worshippers. Earnest

for their religion, as their coming to the festival indicates, the occasion would quicken their hate towards their countrymen who forsook the rites and principles of Judaism. Among others in the crowd were some Jews of Asia, probably from Ephesus, who recognized Paul—perhaps as he was waiting with his party in the temple for their sacrifices to be offered by the priests. They had seen Trophimus an Ephesian in Paul's company in the city, and they supposed he had brought him into the temple in contempt of their religion. The opportunity to take revenge on Paul for causing so many of their nation to apostatize, was too good to be lost. They raised a violent tumult among the multitude, and rushed on him, crying, "Men of Israel, help. This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further, brought Greeks also into the temple; and hath polluted this holy place." The Gentiles were permitted to enter the outer court, but a balustrade and columns with inscriptions in Greek and Latin warned them not to pass farther on pain of death. A similar penalty at the present day forbids the entrance of a Christian or a Jew into the mosque of Omar, on the site of the Jewish temple.

No charge in such a place and at such a festival could rouse the rage of the Jews so suddenly or

to so high a pitch. They dragged Paul out of the temple, that it might not be defiled with blood ; the heavy folding-doors which separated the second court from the court of the Gentiles were shut, probably by the Levites, and but for the prompt interference of the Roman chief captain Lysias, he would have been murdered on the spot. The chief captain was prepared for such an emergency. The Jews, ever restless under the Roman yoke, would be specially prone to break out in tumult, if not rebellion, from the confidence inspired by the vast numbers gathered in the city at such times, and from the religious excitement of the festival. To guard against this, the Romans were accustomed during the feasts to strengthen the garrison in the castle of Antonia, and keep the troops in readiness to suppress commotions. This castle was "on a rock or hill at the north-west angle of the temple area." "The tower at the south-east of the castle was seventy cubits high, and overlooked the whole temple with its courts." The fortress communicated with the northern and western porticoes of the temple area, and had flights of stairs descending into both ; by which the garrison could at any time enter the court of the temple and prevent tumults.

The assailants of Paul were unarmed, and could not dispatch him at once. While they were beat-

ing him for that purpose, a report went up to the commander of the cohort in the castle, "that all Jerusalem was in an uproar." He rushed down with his officers and troops among the enraged multitude just in time to snatch Paul from impending death. When they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they desisted from their outrage; indignant that the prey was thus plucked out of their hands. Approaching Paul, the chief captain laid hold of him and ordered him to be bound to two soldiers, one hand to each, and inquired who he was, and of what crime he had been guilty, that he should be the cause of so wild an excitement. As amid the conflicting cries he could gain no satisfactory information, he commanded him to be carried into the barracks, the part of the castle where the troops were quartered. The infuriated mob, who had been silenced for a moment by dread of the Roman soldiery and by the arrest of Paul, now fearing they should lose the chance to immolate their victim, rushed up the stairs of the castle in hot pursuit, and were with difficulty kept from assaulting the prisoner in defiance of the encircling band on whose shoulders he was borne to place him beyond the reach of their violence.

While the murderous shout, "Away with him," rang from the court beneath, instead of urging the soldiers to hurry him to a place of safety within



the walls of the castle, Paul begged permission to speak to the people. The chief captain was surprised at being addressed by the prisoner in Greek. He had taken him for an Egyptian impostor who not long before led a band of desperadoes from the desert south of Palestine to mount Olivet, and enticed a multitude from Jerusalem to join him in rebellion against the Romans by a promise that the walls of that city would fall down at his command. They were attacked by Felix the governor. Some of them were slain, others were taken captive, but the impostor himself escaped. When assured by Paul that he was a Jew from the distinguished city of Tarsus, the chief captain, perhaps admiring his courage and presence of mind, granted his request.

Standing on the stairs between the two soldiers to whom he was chained, he waved his hand to attract attention. The commotion at once ceased, and all was still ; and when in their own native Aramean or Syriac-Hebrew, he said, " Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I now make unto you," the silence was profound. Paul knew the power of association, and how slight a concession to their prejudices sometimes conciliates a mob. From his long residence in Grecian cities, Greek perhaps was more familiar to him than the Hebrew. Most of his hearers, too, probably under-

stood Greek, as many of them came from countries where that was the common language. At that time, also, Greek was extensively spoken in Palestine. But within the precincts of the temple, accused as he was of disaffection to the Mosaic law, Paul was aware that the Hebrew was more appropriate, and from his lips would find a readier way than the Greek to the hearts of his hearers.

The topics of his address, skilfully chosen and presented, for a time commanded the attention of his audience, bent as they were on shedding his blood. They heard in silence the account of his conversion—of his interview with the crucified Messiah—of his trance in the temple where Jesus himself warned him to depart from Jerusalem, because his testimony would there be rejected. But when he spoke of the command, "Depart; for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles," Jewish pride and bigotry could forbear no longer. His belief in Jesus as the Messiah they could pardon as weakness or enthusiasm; but for putting Jews on a level with Gentiles in the sight of God and in the privileges of the Messiah's reign, there was no forgiveness—blood only could atone for a crime of so deep a dye! With signs of irrepressible rage, the shout rose more furious than before, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live." To secure the safety of the

prisoner, the chief captain ordered him to be carried into the barracks, and to be examined by scourging, that he might under torture acknowledge his supposed crime. Probably not understanding the language in which Paul addressed his countrymen, Lysias thought, from the fresh outbreak among the multitude, that he had been guilty of some flagrant offence.

Paul had no romantic longing for a martyr's sufferings or a martyr's crown. He would use every lawful means which Providence put in his reach to escape both. He knew that if he suffered for Christ, he would be glorified with him ; but then the suffering must not be self-sought or needless. His natural dread of pain was as strong as that of any of his assailants, and to avoid it he did not hesitate to avail himself of his rights as a Roman citizen. He said to the centurion superintending the preparations for his torture, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman uncondemned?" This put a new face on the matter. The very question left no doubt in the centurion's mind that the prisoner was a Roman citizen. The penalty for a false claim to citizenship was death, and few would be "so foolhardy as to assert the privilege without being entitled to it." Hastening to the captain, he said, "What are you about to do? This man is a Roman." Lysias, wishing to have the report of

the centurion confirmed by the prisoner's own lips, came to him in person, saying, "Tell me, art thou a Roman?" On Paul's replying that he was, Lysias said, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom." "But I," rejoined the prisoner, "was free-born; my freedom came by inheritance."

It was now the chief captain's turn to be alarmed. While priding himself on account of his purchased citizenship, he had inflicted on one having a still more honorable claim to this privilege, an indignity keenly felt and severely avenged by that haughty people. The soldiers, too, who had been engaged in binding him for the scourge, quickly withdrew, either at the command of the chief captain, or unwilling to be implicated in the affair.

The next day, Lysias, being not yet informed of the true nature of the prisoner's offence, and wishing to learn what the Jews had to allege against him, commanded the chief priests and all the Sanhedrim to convene, and loosing his bonds, placed him before that high council. Its customary place of meeting was in the hall Gazith, on the south side of the inner court of the temple; a small space only intervening between the steps which led down from the tower of Antonia, and those which led upward to this hall.

Paul stood before the council, calm in the assurance that in changing his religion he had honestly

followed divine teaching. With a steady look at his judges, he exclaimed, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Offended that one arraigned for apostasy from his religion should thus confidently assert his innocence, the chief priest Ananias bid the servants in attendance smite him on the mouth—an arbitrary mode of enjoining silence still practised at the East. Thrown off his guard by this unrighteous order, Paul hastily replied, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" The Jews were accustomed to whitewash their sepulchres, especially in the neighborhood of Jerusalem, at the time of the great festivals, to prevent ceremonial defilement. Outwardly at such seasons fair to the eye, they were full of inward corruption—a fit emblem of hypocrisy. The reproof of the bystanders, "Revilest thou God's high-priest?" recalled the self-possession of the apostle, and with Christian meekness he said, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of my people." He owned that in the excitement of the moment he had not duly considered that Ananias was high-priest. He would not defend the expression he had used, for it was an injunction of the Scriptures,

whose authority in common with them he acknowledged, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of my people."

Paul knew well the elements of character, opinion, and party composing the Sanhedrim. Though they were united in opposition to Christianity, and especially his views of it, he knew there were differences among them of long standing which he might lawfully employ in defeating their malignant designs. The fact which constituted the basis of his doctrine and of Christianity itself, was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He argues with the Corinthians, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen." And if Christ is risen, then there must be a resurrection. The fact of his resurrection as taught by Paul, involved the truth of a grand point held by the Pharisees in opposition to the rival sect of the Sadducees. He could therefore truly identify himself with them on this point. "He cried out in the council, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." The exclamation produced the designed effect. Old rivalries for the moment triumphed over hatred of Christianity even as presented by Paul: the union of the two sects to crush the prisoner was temporarily suspended, and their rage against him was now levelled at each other. The Pharisees, who

could see no evil in one that had avowed himself of their party, strove for his acquittal. "If a spirit or angel hath spoken to him," they said, "let us not fight against God." Between the hot strife of one party to protect Paul, and of the other to maltreat or kill him, he was in danger of being torn in pieces. The chief captain again interfered for his rescue, and he was brought in safety to the barracks.

A review of the exciting scenes of the day, and of the dangers to which he had been exposed since he came to the city, must have agitated even the firm spirit of the apostle. He had indeed been freed from the apprehensions which filled his mind on his journey to Jerusalem, but others more imminent had taken their place. If Christian brethren were unexpectedly friendly, unbelieving Jews were inflexibly hostile, and frantic mobs and frantic rulers were equally bent on his destruction. The arm of heathen power—the walls of the castle—would defend him for the night; but morning dawn might find him the victim of bribery, or of the chief captain's desire to ingratiate himself with the Jews at the expense of an unbefriended prisoner. But the darkness soon passed away. The Lord stood by his bedside, saying, "Be of good cheer; for as thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou also testify at Rome." No message could be

more welcome to the heart of the apostle, not only delivering him from the apprehension of speedy death, but seeming to fall in with the plan he had sketched for future action. He could cry out with the Psalmist, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." He should rise above the malice of his persecutors, and might yet make known the beloved, the honored name of his Master among the barbarous tribes of Spain and Gaul, and perchance of the British isles. Let the enemy weave his plots and spread his meshes around thy path, thou servant of God; thy time is not yet come; be of good cheer, thou must yet testify in the imperial city for the Messiahship of Jesus, and his claim to be "King of kings and Lord of lords." The consolation was timely. It came from Him who knows how to adapt his favors to the wants of his people, and who in every age allows all that trust in him to appropriate to themselves the sweet words, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Early the next morning, with a pertinacity worthy a better cause, and a perverted sense of duty prevalent in that age, but happily not often found in lands blessed with the light of revelation, more than forty Jews banded together and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink till they had slain Paul. They took into their counsels the

chief priests and elders—not all the Sanhedrim, but only the Sadducees who had shown such hostility to Paul the day previous. Their plan was to persuade the chief captain to bring Paul down again from the castle under pretence of making farther inquiry into his case. If they succeeded in this part of their scheme, then the assassins were to fall suddenly on Paul as he was on his way to the council, and put him to death. In doing this they must expose their own lives in the conflict with the guard, but they were willing to run such a risk in gratifying their hatred of the apostle.

From some quarter, Paul's nephew was informed of the conspiracy. Whether the young man resided at Jerusalem, or only came up to keep the festival—whether he was actuated by natural affection, or by Christian sympathy, in revealing the plot to his relative, is not certain. Introduced to the chief captain, he told his story. Lysias, giving credit to the tale, and perhaps by this time feeling an interest in his prisoner, took prompt and judicious measures to place him beyond the reach of violence. He sent him under a strong escort to Cæsarea, the residence of the Roman procurator of Judea, with a letter informing the governor who Paul was, and what was the general nature of the accusation against him, which Lysias intimates did not warrant his detention. At the same time he

states, apparently for gaining credit with the governor, that his main motive for interfering to deliver him from the hands of the Jews, was discovering him to be a Roman. The centurion commanding the guard delivered the letter and his prisoner into the hands of the governor, who having inquired to what province Paul belonged, promised him a hearing when his accusers, as notified by the chief captain, should come from Jerusalem. Meantime, he ordered the prisoner to be kept in the palace built at Cæsarea by Herod, and now occupied by the governor himself.

It was only a week or two since Paul had left Cæsarea on his way to the Pentecost. When the news of his return was known to the brethren, they would proffer any kindness which the prisoner was permitted to receive. He was at least safe for the present from the plots of his enemies, and would find sympathy in the company of his Christian friends when they were allowed, as they were at liberty to do freely in a few days, to visit him in his confinement.

CHAPTER XVIII

PAUL AT CÆSAREA—BEFORE FELIX.

THE Roman governor Felix, who was now, under Providence, to decide Paul's destiny, was the last man into whose hands either he or his friends would wish him to fall. Freed from servitude by the emperor Claudius, and through his brother's influence loaded with honors, he is sketched by the Roman historian as "in the practice of all kinds of lust and cruelty, exercising the power of a king with the temper of a slave." Licentious, cruel, open to bribery, and shrinking from no crime or bloodshed in gratifying his passions, he would not scruple, if his caprice should prompt, to yield up a defenceless prisoner to the clamor of the Jews.

After five days, the high-priest Ananias and a deputation of the Sanhedrim came down from Jerusalem, bringing with them a Roman orator named Tertullus to sustain their accusation against Paul before the governor. The Latin language and the Roman forms of law were used in the courts of the Roman magistrates in the provinces. As the people were not familiar with these, they were accustomed to employ advocates to plead for them before the public tribunals. Young men from Rome often

attended the consuls and pretors sent to govern the provinces, that they might prepare themselves by pleading before the provincial courts "for the sharper struggles of the forum at home." Paul was summoned before the tribunal. The mercenary advocate prefaced his speech with a compliment to Felix for his excellent deeds and prudent administration, which both the orator and the governor must have felt to be as undeserved as it was fulsome. Felix had suppressed the robber bands which infested the country, and so far contributed to its "peace;" but both Josephus and Tacitus represent him as one of the most corrupt and oppressive rulers ever sent by the Romans into Judea. Tertullus laid three charges against Paul: sedition, in causing factious disturbances among the Jews; heresy, in being "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;" and profanation of the temple. He falsely insinuated that when the Sanhedrim had arrested the prisoner, and were about to try him according to their ecclesiastical law, Lysias the chief captain violently interfered and took him out of their hands. The Jews present assailed him at the same time, vehemently confirming the statements of their advocate. Perhaps they hoped that the governor would send Paul back to be tried by the Sanhedrim, and thus give them an opportunity to execute their plot for his assassina-

tion. In the restless state of the Jews at this period, these charges against Paul were fitted to make a deep impression on the governor's mind. Scenes too bloody to be thought of without horror, and too recent to be forgotten, had been enacted in the sacred courts, to avenge an insult perpetrated by a Roman soldier; and if Paul had been guilty of profaning the temple, unless he was given up to appease the rage of his countrymen, such scenes might be renewed.

The governor now signified to the prisoner by a gesture that he might speak in his own defence. Courteously, but with strict truth, Paul said he had the greater satisfaction in pleading his cause, since his judge, having ruled the nation for many years, was well acquainted with its religion and customs.* He then replied to each of the charges made against him by the advocate of the Sanhedrim. He had excited no sedition among the Jews. It was now but twelve days since he went up to Jerusalem to worship, as the governor might easily ascertain; for on his way to the festival he passed through Cæsarea, and abode there some time. His accusers had found him disputing with no one, either in the temple, or in the synagogues, or in the streets. They could prove none of their state-

* Felix had been procurator of Judea six or seven years, which was comparatively a long time.

ments on this point. As to heresy, he owned that he followed the opinion which his accusers called so, worshipping the God of his fathers, as he had a right to do according to the Roman law, yet holding all contained in the Jewish scriptures, and entertaining the prevalent belief of his nation that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. This led him to a practical, earnest effort to live a blameless life in respect both to God and to men. He would no sooner profane the temple of the one, than he would violate the rights of the other. So far from trifling with the worship of the Jews, he had, after several years' absence, come from a distant land to bring alms to his nation and attend the feast of Pentecost; and when set upon by a mob in the temple, he was duly purified and with offerings. He had not caused the tumult, but certain Jews from Asia, who ought to have appeared before the governor with their accusation, if they had any charge to make against him. In their absence he was willing that the accusers present should say what crime they found in him before the Sanhedrim, unless it was for crying out, "Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am called in question before you this day."

Felix understood the state of feeling and parties among the Jews too well to be influenced by their

accusations against the prisoner. Neither was he ignorant of the nature and claims of Christianity. It had many years before found its way into the Roman garrison in Cæsarea, Acts 10 : 1, 48, and there was a Christian brotherhood in that city. He knew that Paul was unjustly accused ; but with the procrastinating spirit which puts off duties it has not courage either to perform, or to refuse outright, he deferred a decision of the case till the chief captain should come from Jerusalem. But we hear no more of Lysias. Whether he was expected by the governor, or his coming was a fiction to make delay plausible, we can only conjecture. Accessible as Felix was to bribes, we might do him no injustice in supposing the incidental notice of alms brought to Jerusalem, Acts 24 : 17, awakened in his mind expectation such as he shortly after indulged, that money would be offered for the prisoner's release. He ordered the centurion to relax the rigor of his confinement, and to let his friends have liberty to visit him and minister to his comfort.

Drusilla, the wife of Felix, was a Jewess, the daughter of Herod Agrippa, whose death is mentioned Acts 12 : 23, and sister of Agrippa and Bernice, who will soon come before our notice in connection with Paul. She had abandoned her husband Azizus, king of the Emesenes, and con-

trary to the laws of her country had been persuaded to marry the heathen procurator of Judea. She had received some account of Paul, perhaps from Felix himself, and wished to hear from his own lips what he had to say of the Christian sect. Felix summoned the prisoner into his presence in the audience-chamber, not now to defend his own cause before a heathen judge, but to exhibit the cause of his Master before "a Roman libertine and a profligate Jewish princess." He must have known, however, that to human view, his life depended on the mere caprice of either.

Paul could select his subject, and discuss it at his own will; touching lightly or not at all on those parts which might be offensive on account of the taste, the opinions, or the conduct of his auditors. He need not stumble on topics disagreeable to the distinguished personages in whose presence he spoke; for he knew their character and history, and the relation of each to the other. Not now Paul the prisoner, but Paul the apostle, of set design, and in words fitly chosen and fitly spoken, he reasoned "of justice and temperance" before those whom he knew to be specially deficient in both, and "of judgment to come," before those who could see in it for themselves only "indignation and wrath." The trembling Felix, glad to be relieved from the presence of his prison-

er, broke off the interview, saying civilly, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." He indeed sent for Paul and had frequent conferences with him, but though the apostle would be none the less earnest and direct, we read not again that Felix felt alarm under the power of truth. The hope of a bribe for the prisoner's release blunted the "sword of the Spirit," and lulled conscience into a fatal sleep.

Paul continued a prisoner two years at Cæsarea under the government of Felix. Some think the relaxation of his restraints, Acts 24 : 23, included a release from bonds, and that he was permitted to occupy another habitation. He was, indeed, left bound by Felix when superseded by Festus, but this may have been a rigor superadded for the occasion to please the Jews, Acts 24 : 27. From the Roman customs of treating prisoners, others think that through this whole period the apostle was chained to his guard. The soldiers relieved each other on this duty. Paul would have an opportunity to preach Christ to many of the garrison, and thus the gospel may have had other trophies of its power than Cornelius and his household among the centurions and soldiers of Cæsarea.

Though the historian passes in silence these two years in the life of Paul, we may safely conclude they were not spent in idleness or lost to the

church. This would be in accordance neither with Paul's character, nor with the analogies of Providence. The brethren at Cæsarea would be often edified by conferences with the apostle in his own apartment. Other churches both in Judea and foreign lands would share in his thoughts and prayers. If he wished to address his converts among the heathen, messengers would not be wanting to convey his letters. Timothy, Luke, and others who had been his attendants, would not desert him in his confinement. Through their instrumentality, he would keep up an acquaintance with the churches over which he yearned with more than paternal affection. We can scarcely suppose that he wrote no epistles all this while, though none exist which are generally ascribed to this period. Some suppose that the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were written during this interval. He would at least have opportunity to gain deeper views of the gospel, both from reflecting on his own experience, and a study of the Scriptures. It has been suggested that the epistle to the Hebrews was addressed by Paul to the church at Cæsarea. If it had its origin in the quietness of his prison there, wherever it was written, this would be an appropriate direction. The epistle shows a closeness of thought, and an insight into the Mosaic dispensation, which may well have been a product

of his powerful intellect in this retirement from active life.

Cæsarea was built by Herod the Great, and named in honor of Augustus. It was a magnificent city—the “Head of Judea.” There was a large foreign element in its population, and the Greek version of the Scriptures was used in the synagogues. “There was a standing quarrel between the Greeks and the Jews, whether it was a Greek or a Hebrew city.” The two parties were much exasperated against each other, and bloody commotions were the consequence. While Paul was a prisoner at Cæsarea, a serious quarrel occurred between the Jewish and heathen population, “the troops were called out into the streets, and both slaughter and plunder were the result.”

Other scenes now occupied the mind of Felix. The political sky was overcast with portentous clouds. The people of the province became exasperated beyond endurance with his administration. Terror in view of “judgment to come” was swallowed up in dread of a summons to answer for his misdeeds before the imperial tribunal. To gain the good-will of the Jews who were about to follow him with their accusations to Rome, trifling with the rights of a Roman citizen, he left Paul in chains when he gave up the palace to his successor.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAUL BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA.

THE dangers thickening around their country and the appalling crimes which marked the period, one might suppose, would divert the thoughts of the Jews from Paul, imprisoned as he had long been in a distant city. But their enmity seems only to have been waiting for an opportunity to act with effect. Felix had fathomed their schemes, and it was useless to attempt wresting the apostle out of his hands. But they hoped for better success with a new governor who was ignorant of their malice and their plot. Three days after assuming the government of the province, Festus went up to Jerusalem. He seems to have been a man of more probity than his predecessor, and disposed, at least in the case of Paul, to act on the principles of justice and the Roman law. He was at once beset by the high-priest and the chief men of the nation, who begged as a favor, on his entrance into office, that he would send Paul, against whom they made accusations, to be judged at Jerusalem, intending to murder him on the road. Since the time when Felix procured the assassination of the high-priest Jonathan in the temple, by

ruffians that escaped with impunity, murders had become common in the country, and life was not secure even in the holy courts from the dagger of assassins who mingled in worship with the multitude. Without knowing the reason for such urgency and for the excitement of the crowd who clamored for Paul's death, Festus refused their request, and ordered them to appear with their charges before his tribunal at Cæsarea. The Jews seem to have anticipated that the governor would sacrifice Paul to their wishes without even the form of a trial; but he told them it was not a Roman custom to surrender any man to death, without an opportunity to meet his accusers face to face and defend himself against their charges. Festus remained eight or ten days at Jerusalem. On the morrow after his return to Cæsarea, Paul was brought before his judgment-seat. The Jews from Jerusalem laid many things to his charge which they could not prove. The allegations were the same, and Paul's defence—from the brief notice of it by the historian—seems to have been substantially the same as on the trial before Felix. The governor had supposed Paul was guilty of a political crime. But he now saw his mistake, Acts 25:18; that the accusations related to some of their religious opinions, and were not of a nature to demand capital punishment. Not having suffi-

cient acquaintance with such matters to act understandingly in the case, and at the same time wishing to gratify the Jews as far as he could consistently with the rights of the prisoner, Festus inquired if he was willing to be tried in his presence before the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. Paul knew he could have no hope of escape if once in the power of his enemies. As a Roman citizen, he had a right to be heard before the emperor, and having, as the governor knew, done the Jews no injury, no one was authorized to gratify the malice of his enemies by surrendering him into their hands. Without any disrespect to the governor, therefore, he said, "I appeal unto Cæsar." In this trying moment, "Thou must also testify for me at Rome," doubtless nerved his resolution, and was his guiding star.

The provincial magistrates had discretionary power to admit or refuse an appeal to the emperor, according to the nature of the crime and the amount of evidence. After consulting the assessors or judges who assisted him at the trial, Festus granted the appeal: "Unto Cæsar shalt thou go." Nero had now been emperor five or six years, and was thus far mild and lenient.

This unexpected movement of the apostle put him beyond the power of the Jews, and they would return to Jerusalem chagrined at their

disappointment. Paul was remanded to prison to await an opportunity for sending him to Rome. The event of his trial there he could not foresee, but he would cheerfully leave it to the disposal of Providence. His thoughts, however, would centre still more on the "eternal city."

In a few days, king Agrippa II. and his sister Bernice came down to Cæsarea to congratulate Festus on his accession to the procuratorship. This Agrippa was not king of Judea. His father was three years king of that country; but, with this exception, it was governed by Roman procurators from the death of Herod the Great to the destruction of Jerusalem. Agrippa II. passed his early life at Rome. As he was only sixteen years old at his father's death, A. D. 44, and was considered too young to succeed him on the throne, Judea was again committed to a procurator. In the year A. D. 50, Agrippa, on the decease of his uncle Herod, succeeded to the sovereignty of Chalcis, a small district in Syria, east of the river Orontes. Three years after, on becoming tetrarch of Trachonitis, a country between the range of Anti-Libanus and the mountains south of Damascus, extending east to the desert, he assumed the title of king. Nero bestowed on him a part of Galilee and Perea, A. D. 55.

On granting an appeal to the emperor, it became

the magistrate's duty to transmit to him a written statement of the offence charged against the prisoner, and of the judicial proceedings taken in reference to it. Festus felt perplexed in discharging this duty in the present case. From his recent residence in the province, he scarcely knew enough of the religious system of the Jews to state distinctly what was the offence they charged against Paul. Agrippa had been trained in a knowledge of the Jewish law, and held a close relation to the worship and ceremonies of the temple. The emperor Claudius had granted to his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, the care of the pontifical robes in the tower of Antonia, the management of the temple and its treasury, and the choice of the high-priests. Agrippa, on becoming king of Chalcis, succeeded to these rights. As the royal visitors spent some time at Cæsarea, Festus took the opportunity to represent Paul's case to Agrippa, and at the same time his own embarrassment in disposing of it. Agrippa expressed his desire to hear Paul. The governor, hoping that after such a hearing he might be able to make out a more definite statement of the prisoner's offence, readily acceded to this request, and fixed on the next day for the interview.

Accordingly on the morrow, Festus, his guests king Agrippa and Bernice, the commandants of the

cohorts stationed at Cæsarea, and the chief men of the city, assembled in the audience-chamber. The display, both in personal decorations and in the train of attendants, was brilliant. Among the principal citizens present, many would be Jews; for though fewer in numbers than the Syrian population, they were far superior in wealth. When all was in readiness, the apostle, at the governor's command, was brought into the hall of audience, chained to the soldier who was his guard.

The assembly was peculiar in its character. It was not a court of justice. Paul had appealed to Cæsar, and he was not now to be put on his defence against accusations, as before Felix and Festus. His speech was not required to be forensic, bearing on specific charges, and aiming to secure his personal acquittal. He was to defend his opinions, not his conduct—the reality of his apostleship, the claims of his Master to be the Messiah—not to prove his own innocence of charges made against him by the Jews. If not a legal tribunal, no more was it an assembly such as greeted Peter in Cæsarea, Acts 10 : 33, where all were “present before God to hear all things” which the apostle was divinely commanded to speak. The curiosity of some, the official duty of others, had brought them together. Not one, perhaps, of the whole number wished to hear Paul for personal benefit;

while many would shut their hearts against the truth, if it thwarted their opinions, their passions, or their interest. The august personage in royal apparel, who, "by the right of courtesy," presided over the meeting—appreciating his privilege to manage the treasury of the temple, regulate its ceremonies, and choose the chief priests of its worship—would ill-brook to hear a plea which tended to disparage this privilege. The high-born princess by his side—more distinguished for beauty than purity of life—might, like her sister Drusilla, be curious to hear, but must be slow to receive, words which in her case could only awake self-reproach. That Roman governor, in all the dignity of office, was no Sergius Paulus who had sent for the apostle through desire "to hear the word of God," Acts 13:7, and those military chieftains probably gave slight signs that the spirit of Cornelius yet lingered among the bands quartered in Cæsarea.

After a formal statement from Festus of the occasion for convening the assembly, Agrippa gave Paul permission to speak. Waving his hand as a token of respect for the audience, he addressed the king in a speech of which the sketch given by the historian has been regarded as a specimen of eloquence seldom surpassed in persuasiveness and felicitous adaptation to circumstances. Similar in

many respects to that on the stairs of the castle already noticed, it is varied skilfully to suit the difference in the occasion and the characters addressed. The details of his early life and conversion, which occupy a large portion of it, we have anticipated in the course of the narrative.

Referring to the Old Testament in proof that the Messiah was to die and rise from the dead, he was interrupted by the heathen governor, who, deeming such an opinion too absurd for a sound mind to credit, cried out, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." This was not said in irony, but with a real belief that the close study of "the many writings" which Festus had doubtless been told by the soldiers the prisoner was constantly poring over, had made him insane. That the apostle had "parchments"—books in the ancient form—especially the scriptures of the Old Testament, during his imprisonment of two years at Cæsarea, we need not doubt. His friends could procure them for him, and he would not voluntarily be so long deprived of the sacred oracles. His frequent perusal of these would excite the wonder, mingled at times with the pity and ridicule, of the illiterate soldiers.

"Courteous and self-possessed, but intensely earnest," Paul replied, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and

soberness;" they describe not fancies, but realities. The king, he was persuaded, was too familiar with the proofs of Christianity to think none could believe them but a madman. With a directness which, if not tempered by the manner and the tone, might have bordered on rudeness, he said to Agrippa, "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Impelled by the force of the sudden appeal, Agrippa responded, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." The heart of Agrippa must have been touched by the prompt, delicate, magnanimous reply, as raising his enchained hand, the prisoner exclaimed, in truthful accents, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

No farther hearing was necessary to convince Agrippa that such a man was not a fit subject for capital punishment, or even for restraint. After a short consultation with the governor and others who sat with him, he told Festus that but for the appeal to Cæsar, which could not be withdrawn, the prisoner might be at once set at liberty. It was now the end of summer, or the beginning of autumn, A. D. 60 or 61.

CHAPTER XX.

VOYAGE TO ROME—SHIPWRECK—PRISONER
AT ROME.

It would not accord with the design of this volume to trace minutely the course of the voyage that Paul now made from Cæsarea to Italy, and exhibit the evidence, derived from ancient writers, the permanent features of the physical world, the prevalent winds and currents in those latitudes, which shows Luke must have been an eye-witness of what he describes. His graphic narrative has recently been subjected to an elaborate and original examination by an English author,* whose treatise furnishes "a new and distinct argument for establishing the authority of the Acts."

However frequent the intercourse was between countries through trading vessels, there was no periodical maritime communication between them in ancient times. An opportunity not occurring to sail directly to Italy, Paul and certain other state-prisoners also destined for Rome, were put on board a vessel of Adramyttium bound on a trad-

* The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul, etc., by James Smith, Esq., London, 1848.

ing voyage along the west coast of Asia. This city was in Mysia on the Aegean sea, opposite the island of Lesbos. Homeward bound, the vessel would be on the proper course from Syria to Italy, and passing the principal seaports of Asia Minor, would afford an opportunity for the transfer of the prisoners to some ship which would take them to their place of destination.

Paul could not, without a trial of feeling, separate from friends who had sympathized with him in his long confinement, nor they, without grief, part with the apostle, in whose prison they had passed so many happy hours in Christian fellowship and praise. We may well suppose an interview no less solemn and tender than that on the sea-shore at Miletus preceded the farewell at Cæsarea.

Paul was not left without Christian friends on his voyage. Luke and Aristarchus, who came over the Aegean with him two years before, and who seem to have remained with him during his confinement, were now his attendants.

On leaving Cæsarea, the prisoners were put under the care of a centurion named Julius, "of the Augustan band." Julius, if he had been stationed in that city, would be acquainted with Paul; perhaps he was present at the interview before Agrippa. This would account for the respect and kindness with which he treated his prisoner.

In one day the voyagers reached Sidon, where the centurion gave Paul "liberty to go to his friends to refresh himself." On leaving Sidon, westerly winds, such as still prevail there at this season, drove them from the direct course, and they sailed between the island of Cyprus and the coast of Asia. Standing northward towards the Cilician shore, to take advantage of the land-breeze and the current which constantly sets westward along the coast of Asia Minor, they passed prosperously over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, to Myra in Lysia. Myra had an excellent harbor, and was visited by many ships trading between Egypt and Italy, when the winds did not suffer them to take the direct course. An Alexandrian ship laden with wheat and about to sail for Italy was then in port, and the centurion transferred his prisoners to it. Egypt at this time was the granary of Rome, and the ships employed in transporting corn from that country were equal in size to modern merchantmen.

It took the ship "many days" to "come over against Cnidus," a town on the south-west promontory of Asia Minor, only an ordinary day's sail from Myra. The vessel slowly worked its way through the smooth water under the lee shore, against a north-west wind which prevails in this part of the Archipelago during the summer months.

At Cnidus they would have had an excellent artificial harbor; and every convenience for wintering. But the wind not permitting them to enter it, they took a course nearly south, passing around Salomone, at the eastern end of Crete. For the sake of shelter from the north-west wind, they coasted along the southern shore of that island to a roadstead called Fair Havens, near to a town named Lasea. Here the shore turns suddenly to the north, and the mariner is exposed to the full force of the wind and waves.

Slow progress had been made on the voyage. It was after "the fast"—the great day of expiation, which fell about the autumnal equinox—and "sailing was now dangerous." "The Greeks and Romans considered the period of safe navigation as closing in October, and recommencing about the middle of March." Not having the mariner's compass, they were so dependent on the sun and stars for directing their course, that they dreaded a voyage during the long nights, thick clouds, and severe storms of winter. Paul had been a frequent traveller, and knew from his own experience the perils of the sea, having already "thrice suffered shipwreck." He advised the ship's company, who seem to have been consulting what, in the circumstances, was proper to be done, to spend the winter at Fair Havens. In pursuing the voyage at

this season of the year, he saw great exposure not only of the vessel and cargo, but of the passengers and crew. Whether he spoke from the suggestions of his own mind or from prophetic impulse, the event justified his discernment. The centurion, however, as was to be expected, gave more heed to the opinion of the master and owner of the ship than to his prisoner. That Paul was suffered to give advice in his circumstances, shows he had gained no small influence during the few weeks he had been on board. He had not been idle. With nearly three hundred of his fellow-men around him—Jews and Gentiles—he could not be silent. He would speak of his Master, and amid the varied sounds that weary the ear, and sadden the heart, and disgust the taste, in such a crowd, the name of Jesus would flow forth sweetly from his lips.

The majority of the company determined to attempt reaching a more commodious harbor about forty miles farther west, called Phœnix. A gentle south wind springing up, encouraged the hope of success; but they were soon struck by a typhoon, or furious tempest from the north-east. The ship, not able to keep her course, was driven towards a small island called Clauda, about twenty miles south-west from Crete. Under the shelter of this island, they succeeded, but with difficulty, in taking their boat on board. "Having been towed

more than twenty miles through a raging sea, it could hardly fail to have been filled with water." They now undergirded the ship—a frequent operation in ancient times to prevent a vessel from opening its seams and foundering. The process consisted in passing large ropes or cables around the hull, and fastening them on deck. Ships carried a supply of such ropes, to be used in case of emergency.

They now began to apprehend a new danger. At this season of the year, an eastern gale in the Levant is apt to be lasting. If the tempest should continue several days, they feared they should be driven on the quicksands or dangerous shoals south-west of Crete, on the coast of Africa. They made what preparations they could for weathering the storm, and turning the head of the vessel as near as possible to the wind, or lying-to, were borne on at its will. Another and another day brought no relief. Once and again they lightened the ship by casting overboard the supernumerary rigging and furniture of the ship, and the heavier articles of merchandise. Neither sun nor stars now shone for many days, and they knew not where they were—from what quarter to look out for danger, or whither to turn for safety. All hope of escape was gone.

Occasions such as this develope real greatness,

and genuine trust in God. When there had been long abstinence, either from want of time to prepare food, or heart to partake of it, when all were worn out with fatigue or disheartened by vain attempts for relief, Paul stood up in the midst of the company, exhausted but not dispirited like the rest. He reminded them of his advice, which, if they had followed, this evil would not have befallen them. But he did not address them to reprove their folly, or taunt them for their misjudgment. He had tidings for them which, if credited, would dispel their despair. "Be of good cheer," he said, "even now," hopeless as the case appears, "for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." While the heathen sailors and soldiers were raising loud cries to their gods for deliverance, Paul and his two Christian companions Luke and Aristarchus, would often bend the knee in united supplications not only for themselves, but for the ship's company. And now the result was manifest: "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." How many who had ridiculed Paul's earnestness for their conversion to Christ as enthusiasm or folly, would now press

around him, and hail him as their deliverer. How little do the world think that they are often indebted to Christians, whom they have despised as bigots, or slandered as hypocrites, for blessings pertaining even to this life.

Day after day still wore off tediously, but the promised deliverance seemed no nearer, and they may have begun to fear they had been mocked or deluded by their fellow-passenger. But about the middle of the fourteenth night, as they were drifting in the Adriatic, the sailors thought they saw signs that they were near land. Sounding with the lead, they found the water twenty fathoms deep; and soon sounding again, they found it but fifteen fathoms. Fearing they should be driven upon rocks on an unknown coast, they cast out four anchors from the stern, and waited for the slow approaching day. They let down the boat into the sea, under pretence of carrying out anchors from the foreship, but intending to escape to the shore and leave the soldiers and prisoners to their fate. Paul, more self-possessed or more watchful than the rest, penetrated their purpose, and said to the centurion, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." God's promise involved the use of the appropriate means. The ropes were cut, and the boat set adrift.

Strong in confidence that Jehovah is a God of

truth, Paul besought them all to take food. They would need the strength it imparts in the coming struggle, and they might be sure the danger would soon be overpast. The whole ship's company looking on in respectful silence, he took bread and giving "thanks to God," began to eat. The others, revived by his cheerful demeanor, partook of food, and rejoiced as if already safe on the shore. Then they threw overboard the wheat which constituted the main part of their cargo. The land was now visible through the atmosphere obscured by the drenching rain, Acts 28 :2, but they knew not what country they were approaching. The coast was a continuous chain of rocks, except an inlet with a shore which seemed favorable for stranding the ship with safety to their lives. Cutting away the anchors, unfastening the rudder-bands, and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they run the ship aground. The bow stuck fast on the shore, but the stern floated, and was broken by the violence of the waves. For the safety of the guard as well as their own, the prisoners in this extremity must be set at liberty. But the ungenerous soldiers, to relieve themselves of punishment or blame, if in the general confusion any of them should swim to the shore and escape, purposed each to kill the prisoner chained to his own person. The centurion, however, had too high a regard for Paul to

allow this atrocious deed. As the apostle had predicted, the vessel was wrecked ; but the whole company—two hundred and seventy-six in number—some in one way, and some in another, at length got safely ashore. They then knew they were on the island Melita, now called Malta.

This island lies sixty miles south of Sicily. It is seventeen miles in length, and nine in its greatest breadth. The ship was wrecked on the northern side, in a place now called St. Paul's bay. At that time, parts of the island were thinly populated and woody. The inhabitants near the scene of the disaster—whom, from their language, which was neither Greek nor Roman, but of Phœnician origin, the historian terms "barbarians"—showed the strangers cast on their shore no ordinary kindness—kindling for them a fire, and welcoming them to its warmth. And much need had the sufferers of kindness ; for they were not only drenched by the sea, but by a driving rain, and shivering with the cold. The prisoners on landing were doubtless put again under restraint. The company scattered here and there in search of fuel to keep up the heat. Paul gathered a bundle of sticks from among the rocks, and cast them on the fire. A viper which had been among the sticks torpid from the cold, now restored to activity by the heat, darted forth from the flames and fastened on his hand. Judg-

ing from his chain that he was a prisoner, the ignorant people said among themselves that he was doubtless a murderer, and though he had escaped the sea, vengeance would not suffer him to live. But he shook off the venomous reptile, and "felt no harm." The people were in expectation that he would become swollen, or suddenly fall down dead. But after some time had passed without any signs of injury, they changed their opinion of the man, and cried out that he was a god. Such repeated proofs of the divine care in imminent dangers, must have strengthened the faith of the apostle, so that he might well say, "I know in whom I have believed."

The Roman governor of the island, named Publius, who had possessions near the place where the vessel was lost, hospitably entertained the whole company for three days. The father of Publius "lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux." The wonderful feat, as they would regard it, which Paul had performed, would naturally cause the belief that he might cure diseases. He was sent for to the sick-chamber. He would not lose so good an opportunity to magnify the name of his Master, whose power he would assure them it was, and not his own, which shielded him from the viper's fang. After prayer for divine aid, he laid his hands on the sick man and healed him. This new won-

der brought others to seek his help, and they too were healed.

The company remained three months on the island. How the other prisoners were disposed of, or how Paul employed the time, the historian does not mention. But he would not spend so long a period in inactivity, when the miracle wrought on himself, and the miracles wrought through him on others, opened the way for publishing his message. His heart would often turn to Rome, and it might require an effort of his active spirit to bear patiently the long delays on the voyage; but he would not slight present duties because impeded in his plans for wider usefulness. On a small island, or in the metropolis of the world, his love of Christ could not be shut up in his own bosom. In the very intensity of his love there was "woe" for him, "if he preached not the gospel."

Paul and his fellow-prisoners were now put on board an Alexandrian vessel which had wintered in the island, and was bound to Italy. When they departed, the people, no doubt grateful to Paul for the benefits he had conferred on them, loaded the whole company with things necessary on their voyage. As the apostle looked over the prow of the ship, the image of Castor and Pollux, the favorite fabled gods of ancient mariners, would meet his eye. For trade, or a better wind, the vessel was

detained three days at Syracuse, on the south-east coast of Sicily, and eighty miles north of Malta. Then they passed over to Rhegium, on the extreme south of Italy, opposite Messina. The day after, with a fair south wind, they sailed through the straits of Messina, the fabled Scylla and Charybdis. The next day their voyage ended at Puteoli, eight miles north of Naples. The Alexandrian trade with Italy centred here. Only the land route to Rome now remained to complete the journey. The distance is about a hundred and thirty miles.

At Puteoli, Paul once more found himself among Christian brethren, and by the courtesy of the centurion he was permitted to enjoy their society seven days. Then the company went on their journey towards Rome. The news of his coming had reached that city from Puteoli. Acts 28 : 15. Rejoicing that the purpose which the apostle had formed two or three years before, Rom. 15 : 24, was about to be accomplished, some of the brethren set out immediately to meet and welcome him. One party went as far as Appii Forum, a town about forty miles from Rome, at the head of a canal twenty miles long, running by the side of the Appian way, through the Pontine marshes. Over this part of the route travellers could pass in barges drawn by mules, or on the paved way itself. At this place for changing conveyances,

where crowds of boatmen and strangers congregated, the heart of the apostle was gladdened by the warm greetings of the brethren from Rome. Some of these were no doubt among the friends to whom he had sent salutations in the epistle to that city, and had been personally known to him at the east. And when, ten miles farther onward, he met another party at *Tres Tabernae*, "The Three Taverns," who had come for the same purpose, "he thanked God, and took courage." The historian, the companion of his journey, makes no mention of the apostle's emotions while passing through a region surpassingly rich in the beauties of nature and art, and furnishing at every step some new object of mythologic or poetic interest. His thoughts were elsewhere—and vineyards and villas, temples and tombs, mountains bright with clustering towns, and valleys traversed by stupendous aqueducts or massive bridges, were of no account to his lone heart in comparison with the cheering words and sympathies of Christian friendship.

At length, they reached the magnificent imperial city with its population of two millions, gathered from every country and clime, and crowded "within a circuit of twelve miles." The centurion delivered Paul to the prefect of the Prætorian guards, to whose custody were committed prisoners sent

to Rome for trial before the emperor. The prefect at this time, it is supposed, was Burrus, a distinguished Roman general. The prefect of the Prætorian guards, "was the most important subject of the emperor." The camp of the Prætorian guards, who were ten thousand in number, was outside the city walls. But the quarters of the emperor's household troops were attached to his palace on mount Palatine; within the city. To which of the two Paul was brought, critics are not agreed.

We may well suppose that the centurion, after what he knew of Paul, on surrendering his prisoner, would speak well of him to the prefect. Festus, too, may have stated the accusation against the apostle in terms which would secure him indulgence. Whatever the reason, the prefect permitted him to live by himself in a hired house, under the guard of a Roman soldier.* The means for this would not be wanting. If not easily supplied by the brethren at Rome, they would be furnished the beloved apostle by his converts in other cities. Phil. 4:18. For a few days at least, he was probably the guest of some Christian family, Acts 28:23—perhaps of his old friends Aquila and Priscilla.†

* The Roman laws allowed this favor to a prisoner accused of no very serious offence.

† The Jewish quarter of the city was on the opposite side

Paul was a Jew, a Jewish patriot—a genuine lover of his country and his countrymen, desiring the highest privileges and the richest blessings for both, and none the less for being a Christian. Because he disclaimed their bigoted, arrogant assumption to be the “peculiar people” of God under the Christian dispensation, he did not deny that even now they had “much advantage” over the Gentiles. Because he taught that the heathen need not submit to rites and observances which had been a sore burden to the Jews themselves, he did not place the institutions of Moses on a level with the religion and customs of other nations. Because he insisted even in face of persecution and death, that there is no Jew and no Greek in the church, but that “all are one in Christ Jesus,” he did not look on the moral condition of the Jews as no better than that of the Gentiles. In granting to others an equal right with the Jews to the privileges of the gospel, God had not “cast away his people;” no more had Paul. When he turned to the Gentiles, in obedience to divine instructions, after the Jews in any city had perversely and obstinately rejected his message, it was ever with a heavy heart. His feelings as a Jew—his love of the Jews—his yearning for their of the Tiber from the station of the emperor’s household guard, and connected with it by the Palatine bridge.

conversion to Christianity, gushed forth in the epistle to the church in Rome with a fulness and force which he could not repress.

We are not surprised, then, to find Paul, three days after his arrival at the metropolis, inviting the chief men among his countrymen to an interview with him at his lodgings. As we have seen, the Jewish quarter of Rome would be in his neighborhood, if he was placed at the station of the emperor's household troops. At Rome, as elsewhere, the apostle would, if he had opportunity, preach the gospel first to the Jews. The object of the interview was, therefore, to conciliate their goodwill and do away prejudice, if they entertained any against him from what they had heard from the Jews in Palestine, or from his appeal to the emperor. He had done nothing, he affirmed, against the nation or the customs of their fathers; and he had not appealed to the emperor; as some of his enemies seem to have represented, for the purpose of accusing the Sanhedrim at Rome. He had been driven to appeal by the malice of the Jews, who opposed the determination of Felix and Festus to acquit him after a fair trial. To this his visitors replied, that they had received no written or verbal information to his discredit from Judea. They probably had not heard of his appeal to the emperor until informed of it by himself. But they

deemed it proper to hear what he thought of the Christian sect; for he must know that it was "everywhere spoken against." They agreed to meet again on a certain day at his lodgings to hear him on this matter.

As already stated, Claudius banished the Jews from Rome about ten years before this, for exciting a tumult; but they had returned from exile, and at this time enjoying complete toleration, "seem to have been numerous, wealthy, and influential." Their late experience would incline them to avoid contention with the Christian community, and moderate their opposition to the gospel. On their first interview with Paul, they even seem indisposed to avow their knowledge that such a community existed at Rome. Perhaps they did not think it expedient to appear inimical to one who had met so favorable treatment from the Roman officials, both in Palestine and in Rome itself. When, therefore, on the appointed day many of them assembled to hear what Paul had to say in proving the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth, we do not witness the furious opposition manifested on other occasions, as he addressed his countrymen on this offensive topic. They disagreed among themselves, indeed, as to his teachings—some believing, and some rejecting his doctrine; but though he reasoned with them from morning to evening,

they used no personal violence, nor, as far as we read, treated him with contumely. The assembly broke up in the midst of a warm discussion—the apostle addressing to their consciences the words of the prophet Isaiah, “Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” As hardened and incorrigible they rejected his message, he assured them salvation was sent to the Gentiles, who would receive it. Great discussion was excited among the Jews as they departed from the interview, and we may hope that the result was the conversion of some to the faith.

For two years Paul continued a prisoner in his own hired house, chained, it is supposed, to a soldier, yet at liberty to converse with any who sought his society for the sake of friendship, or to hear him speak of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Though he was bound, the word of the Lord was not; the church of Rome gained accessions from the soldiers of the emperor, Phil. 1:13, and even from the inmates of the palace itself. Phil.

4 : 22. These, often the agents of Nero's bloody purposes—unwillingly perhaps—may have been more susceptible to the gospel, than some who hear it from childhood only to treat it with neglect.

CHAPTER XXI.

WRITES COLOSSIANS, PHILEMON, EPHESIANS, PHILIPPIANS, AND HEBREWS—ACQUITTED, AND AGAIN IMPRISONED—WRITES TITUS, AND II. TIMOTHY—DEATH.

THE apostolic history breaks off while Paul was yet a prisoner, and the subsequent events of his life must be gathered chiefly from his own writings. Most critics suppose that Luke wrote his history at Rome, and that he finished his work before the case of Paul was decided. If Theophilus, to whom the "*Acts*" is dedicated, was an Italian, as has been suggested, the historian might not need to narrate the result of Paul's imprisonment for the information of his friend.

The trial of the apostle before the emperor may have been deferred for the sake of giving his accusers an opportunity to be personally present, as the Roman law required. Or the delay may have arisen from the tardiness of the prosecutors in collecting their proofs and procuring the attendance of witnesses. Or the emperor himself may have deferred the trial, if not from corrupt motives like Felix, at least from procrastination. There were several charges against Paul, each of which was to

be tried separately, and judgment was to be pronounced on one before proceeding to another. Some one or all of these causes may have contributed to prolong the duress of the apostle at Rome. But he was not inactive either in preaching the gospel, or in watching over the churches. While Christians were edified and converts were gathered in the metropolis, he never more effectively discharged the debt which he felt he owed "both to the Greeks and to the barbarians," than in the epistles which he sent forth from his seclusion by the hands of faithful messengers, thus confirming the churches of that age, and bequeathing a rich legacy to distant nations and distant climes.

One of the first of these epistles is that to Philemon, a member of the church at Colosse, a town in Phrygia, near a hundred and fifty miles east of Ephesus. He was a convert of the apostle—probably at Ephesus—for Paul seems not yet, if ever, to have visited Colosse, Col. 2:1. Onesimus, a servant of Philemon, had fled from his master and found his way to Rome, the great gathering point of the civilized world. Here he fell in with Paul, who may have seen him with his master in Asia. The apostle did not overlook a servant, or slave, as too degraded for notice. The early teachers of Christianity turned their attention specially to this class, whom heathenism in its arrogance deemed

unworthy even to mingle in the public festivals and religious exercises. Christianity soon incurred heathen contempt for having among its adherents so many women, children, beggars, and slaves.

Onesimus became a convert under the preaching of Paul. He ministered to the apostle, who needed and highly valued his services. But useful as Onesimus was, Paul would not retain him, without the consent of Philemon. Being about to send Tychicus to Colosse, he put Onesimus under his care, with a letter to Philemon which forms a part of the sacred canon. Though brief and restricted in its object, it has been "universally admired as a model of graceful, delicate, and manly writing"—"a voucher for the apostle's urbanity, politeness, and knowledge of the world." Onesimus returned voluntarily to Colosse, where, by a pious, honest life, in contrast with his former conduct, Phil. 11:18, he could show the excellence of the gospel. Frank and open in representing the conduct of Onesimus, the apostle is equally frank, yet courteous, in stating what he expects from Philemon. Considering his relation to the latter, he might as an apostle be bold to enjoin on him a friendly reception of Onesimus, but he asks it as a personal favor. A request from such a quarter, so gracefully and so confidently urged, would override any thought of legal claims. Christian love would see

in the reformed returning fugitive the image of the apostle himself, who in due time would "have joy" by hearing of even "more," Phil. 21, than the ready compliance of Philemon with his request.

Among the Christian brethren from Asia who were with Paul at Rome, was Epaphras; a distinguished teacher of the church at Colosse. Paul calls him his "fellow-prisoner," Phil. 23, either because he was really imprisoned, or because, through personal devotion to the apostle, he was often drawn to his abode. The two enjoyed an intimate Christian intercourse, it is manifest, from the manner in which Paul speaks of the frequent earnest prayers of Epaphras for the church at Colosse, Col. 4 : 12. Though not probably the founder of this church, Paul felt warmly interested in its welfare in sympathy with his friend, its faithful minister. He heard with grief of the danger to which it was exposed from the inroads of error, and urged perhaps by Epaphras, as well as by the promptings of his own mind, he wrote his epistle to that church and sent it by the hand of Tychicus. The same messenger was the bearer of the "epistle to the Ephesians." These epistles wear numerous marks, both in the topics and the manner of expression, of having been written near the same time. Some think the epistle to the Ephesians is the same to which Paul refers, Col. 4 : 16, as the epistle to the Laodi-

ceans. To whichever of these churches the epistle was directed, its genuineness and authority would remain unshaken. Both epistles abound in lofty views of evangelical truth, and in precepts suited to the church in all ages. They indicate a ripening Christian experience, the mellowness of increasing years. They manifest a love for the doctrines clustering around the cross, characteristic of mature godliness, a deep sense that the gospel should pervade every faculty of the soul and every relation of life. The epistle to Colosse, where a mixture of Judaism, Christianity, and Oriental philosophy was beginning to corrupt the church, contains warnings and exhortations fitted to meet that phase of evil. When Paul wrote this epistle, he seems to have been influenced by the errors springing up in the churches of provincial Asia, to forego for a season his plan of evangelizing the West, and in case of regaining his liberty to design revisiting the East. He requests Philemon to prepare him lodgings at Colosse, Phil. 22, and soon after he expresses his confident expectation of shortly coming to Philippi, Phil. 2:24, doubtless on his way to Asia.

Never, except in his hours of slumber, out of sight of soldiers for two years at Cæsarea and now at Rome, Paul had become as familiar with military equipments as if he was a soldier of Cæsar and the

camp, not of Christ and the cross. The striking description of the Christian panoply in the epistle to the Ephesians, 6 : 10-17, may owe its birth to this circumstance. The Pretorian guards outside the city, or the emperor's household troops on the Palatine hill, were always in his sight ; and shields and swords, helmets and spears were perhaps gleaming in his eyes when he dictated this noble passage to his amanuensis. But he looked at the implements of war itself in the light of heaven—they would remind him of a higher contest, and make "the gospel of peace" only the dearer to his soul.

The epistle to the beloved church at Philippi appears to have been written a few months later. The labors of the apostle had now begun to produce fruits in converting to the faith some even "in the palace," though this success but irritated his opposers, Phil. 1 : 13-16. He trusted at this time that he should regain his liberty, Phil. 1 : 25. The occasion of his writing was the return of Epaphroditus to Philippi, whom the church at that place had sent to Rome with a pecuniary contribution for Paul. The heart of the apostle overflowed with gratitude and joy for this kind remembrance by his converts, who, ten years before, had twice contributed to relieve his necessities.

Without some familiar letters like this, we should

never have known the susceptibilities of Paul to friendship. We should not have anticipated that the great apostle, full of ardor, and absorbed in devotion to his work, with firmness which death itself could not daunt, and attachment to truth which sometimes manifested itself in forms seeming almost at war with affection, would be so deeply wounded by the desertion of friends, or so cheered by tokens of confidence and love. A superficial view might lead one to wish that Paul had more of the gentleness of John : but a closer inspection of his writings, a deeper insight into his character, will show as much that is genial in his temper as was consistent with the work marked out for him by Providence.

Ephraïm, the bearer of the gratuity from Philippi, had been dangerously sick at Rome, but was now so far recovered as to be able to set out on his homeward journey. The apostle regards this preservation of the messenger's life as a distinguished personal favor : for the death of one who had undertaken such a service in his behalf, would have plunged him in the deepest sorrow.

This epistle "resembles more the production of a father addressing his children, than that of an apostle laying down authoritatively what is to be received and followed."

Though, as we have said, Paul, when writing

this epistle, trusted that he should be set at liberty, he seems less confident of it, than when writing to Philemon, Phil. 2:17. An air of sadness pervades even the triumph with which he anticipates the end of his course—of sadness, not on his own account, but because the continuance of his life was desirable for his converts, Phil. 1:21-24. It is manifest from the increased boldness of his enemies, that they thought there was less risk in opposing him. The political sky, too, was more lowering. Burrus the prefect, who had shown him so much favor, died about this time, whether a natural death or from poison is uncertain. This broke the power of Seneca the philosopher, who was Nero's tutor, and had been a restraint on his pupil. The administration of the emperor, hitherto comparatively mild, now "became gradually worse and worse, till at length its infamy rivalled that of his private life."

We may reckon the epistle to the Hebrews among the noblest memorials of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, though questions have been raised both as to its author and the place where it was written. It seems to resemble a treatise as much as an epistle, and some choose to call it by the former name. Whether directed or not to an individual church, it is adapted in its main features to general circulation among the Hebrews, believ-

ing or unbelieving. It does not treat Christianity as only a more perfect development of Judaism, as the Judaizers held, but Judaism as the harbinger of a higher dispensation. If the epistle to the Romans discloses the deep insight of the apostle into the nature of Christianity, the epistle to the Hebrews discloses the reach of his intellect in apprehending the significancy of the ceremonies, sacrifices, and institutions ordained under the Mosaic law. The power of the writer is manifest in evolving from historical events and Levitical rites, which some of the present age regard as unworthy a place in the Bible, truths dear to every pious heart. If his express object had been to illustrate the permanent value of the Old Testament, he could not have accomplished it more effectually than he has done in this epistle. There is not a richer vein of evangelical piety in the sacred volume than pervades this portion of it. None of the inspired penmen have exhibited so clearly as its author the truths underlying the forms of the Mosaic dispensation, and none have traced so lucidly the unbroken stream of faith from its fountainhead downward to his own times.

After a detention at Rome for two years, Paul probably was tried before Nero in the spring, A. D. 63. The most serious charge against him, in the view of the Roman government, would be that

which alleged him to be "a pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition among the Jews throughout the world." Happily he could disprove this by an appeal to the epistle which, several years after Nero assumed the government, he wrote to the Christians of Rome, many of whom were Jews, urging them to "be in subjection to the higher powers," Rom. 13:1-6. Yet, however just his cause, however innocent his conduct, nothing could be more improbable than that, before a tribunal open to every corrupt influence, the apostle would escape condemnation. But "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." From what motive, or through what human agency, Nero was prompted to acquit the prisoner, must be left to the revelations of another world. It may have been to gratify some member of his household, who, secretly an adherent of Paul, had interceded in his favor, or it might have been from some pique he had taken against the Jews, whom it gave him pleasure to disappoint; whatever it was, we shall scarcely be wrong in thinking it was not from a regard to the demands of justice. To these he seems to have been inaccessible.

Some suppose the imprisonment mentioned by Luke was closed with Paul's martyrdom. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile several statements in the second epistle to Timothy with this hypothesis. The development also, of church

organization, and the matured heresies implied in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, require a later date.

When acquitted and set at liberty, we should expect to find Paul in the fulfilment of his avowed purpose, passing into Macedonia and Asia. This course he seems to have taken. From Macedonia he wrote his first epistle to Timothy, whom he had left at Ephesus to counteract heretical teachers, 1 Tim. 1 : 3. The apostle himself expected shortly to return to that city, 1 Tim. 3 : 14. When in this region, he would scarcely fail to visit the church at Colosse, and his friend Philemon. Perhaps, also, he went once more to Palestine in pursuance of a purpose formed during his imprisonment at Rome, Heb. 13 : 23. How long the errors and divisions which had invaded the churches detained him at the East, we can only conjecture. He was permitted to enjoy an interval of sweet fellowship with his children in the faith at Philippi. If, as some suppose, he visited Spain, where many Jews appear to have settled, the voyage was probably taken the year following his liberation. He was also in Crete, where he left Titus to complete the organization of the churches on that island, Tit. 1 : 5. He probably wrote the epistle to Titus soon after at Ephesus.

Worn down as he was with imprisonments and labors, and now "Paul the aged," he was still

unwearied in the cause of his Master. "In journeyings often," might still be his motto. He passed from country to country, superintending the churches and preaching the gospel. He left to his younger associates certain duties which might be burdensome from declining vigor, or might interfere with other duties that could be better performed by himself in person. The presence of the venerable apostle and confessor for the faith would of itself go far to restore harmony among brethren, and put down the teachers of heresy. Once more he trod the beach at Miletus—perhaps was greeted as he entered Troas by the grateful Eutychus—and exchanged salutations with the friends who had survived the ten long years since he departed from Corinth, 2 Tim. 4 : 13, 20. Thence he went northwardly to Nicopolis, on the coast of Epirus, where he intended to spend the winter. This was probably in A. D. 67. Here, as many think, he was arrested and again conveyed as a prisoner to the metropolis. Others think that his arrest took place in Spain.

Rome was desolated, A. D. 64, by a fire which raged five or six days, and destroyed a large part of the city. Nero was suspected of having kindled the fire, and to remove suspicion from himself, he accused the Christians of causing the calamity. A violent persecution was the result. The fury of

the populace was roused against the followers of Jesus, and they were tortured in every way that malicious ingenuity could invent. "Some were covered over with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; others, besmeared with pitch, were set up as lights in the night time, and thus burnt to death." Several years had elapsed since this outbreak, and the popular feeling against the church was probably modified at Rome; still, as has been suggested, one charge against the apostle may have been, that, during his former confinement, he excited the Christians to fire the city. Whatever was the offence alleged against him, this imprisonment was much more severe than the former. It seems to have been difficult and hazardous for his friends to get access to him; and he invokes warm blessings on "the household of Onesiphorus," a member of the Ephesian church, who being at Rome, had the courage to face the obloquy and danger of seeking out his prison, 2 Tim. 1:16-18. Some on whose fidelity he relied, had forsaken him, or were unwilling to own his fellowship, 2 Tim. 4:16; and he did not think it needless in a letter urging Timothy to visit him at Rome, to say, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner." He had already stood alone before the Roman tribunal, and though the Lord

had delivered him "out of the mouth of the lion," and he "had defended himself successfully against the first of the charges brought against him," he seems not to have anticipated an acquittal at another hearing. There is an earnestness in his counsels and exhortations to Timothy which shows he regarded them as his parting words, if his dear son in the faith should not reach Rome before the conclusion of his trial. And when he ended the letter with the solemn benediction, "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit," "Grace be with thee," he doubtless felt his next fellowship with Timothy might be before the throne of their Master in heaven.

It is of little consequence for us to know who were the spectators, or what spot the scene of Paul's martyrdom; but it may profit us to gather around his prison-cell, and learn how he felt in the prospect of death. Was he sustained by the principles and hopes which he had often offered for the support of others in life's closing hour? Was the presence of the Saviour enough to banish the terrors of the grave? Did he regret his conversion to the Christian faith, and turn from the cross of Christ to seek comfort from the forms of Judaism? We have his own estimate of his course, formed not amid the weakness of disease, or the delusions which sometimes curtain the sick-bed, but in the

full exercise of his mental powers. To confirm the faith and courage of Timothy, whom he is urging to be "instant in season, out of season," in the work of an evangelist, he holds out his own example and his reward in prospect. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

Soon after this, Paul was led forth to martyrdom. History does not inform us of the mode of his execution. It is supposed to have been decapitation with the sword. He suffered near the close of Nero's reign, A. D. 68. How sweet to exchange his Roman prison for a palace in the skies—his fetters for a celestial garland—the company of the rough soldier to whom he was chained, for the society of Jesus, and of "just men made perfect."

Time has meted out to the monarch and the martyr each his reward; but who shall measure their reward in eternity? Who would now be Nero? Who would not be Paul? "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."



CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

FROM CONYBEARE AND HOWSON'S LIFE AND
EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL.

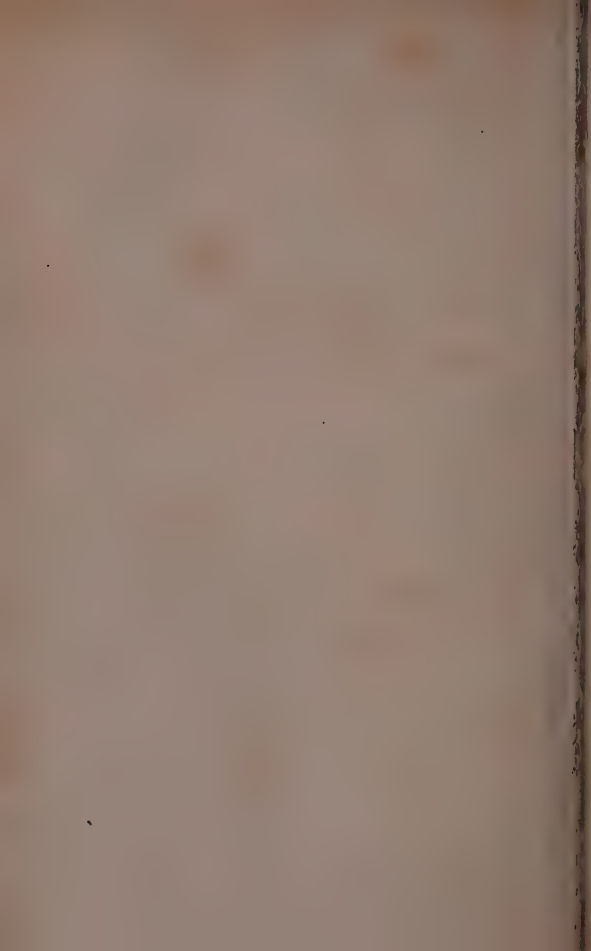
A. D.	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	COTEMPORARY EVENTS.
36	(?) St. Paul's conversion, sup- posing the ἐτη ρία of Gal. 1:18 Judaically reckoned.	
37	(?) At Damascus.	Death of Tiberius, and accession of CALIGULA, March 16.
33	(?) Flight from Damascus to Jerusalem, and thence to Tar- sus.	
39	(?) } During these years St. Paul	
40	(?) } preaches in Syria and Ci-	
41	(?) } licia, making TARSUS his	Death of Caligula, and accession
42	(?) } headquarters, and proba-	of CLAUDIUS, Jan. 25. Judea
43	(?) } bly undergoes most of the	and Samaria given to Herod
	(?) } sufferings mentioned at 2	Agrippa I.
	(?) } Cor. 11: 24-26, namely,	
	(?) } two of the Roman and the	
	(?) } five Jewish scourgings,	
	(?) } and three shipwrecks.	Invasion of Britain by Aulus
		Plautius.
44	He is brought from Tarsus to Antioch. Acts 11: 26, and stays there a year before the fam- ine.	Death of Herod Agrippa I., Acts 12. Cuspius Fadus, as procurator, succeeds to the government of Judea.

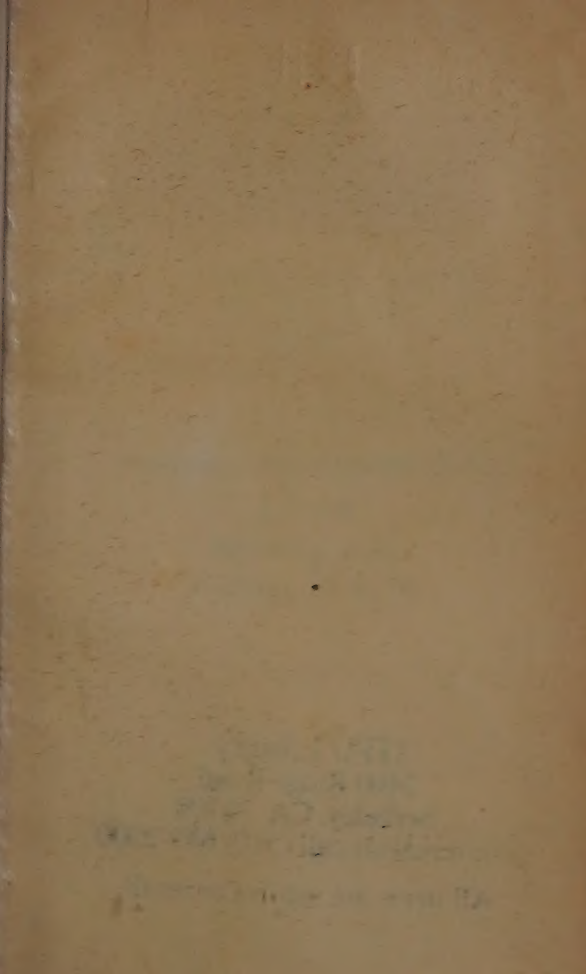
A. D.	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	COTEMPORARY EVENTS.
45	He visits Jerusalem with Barnabas to relieve the famine.	
46	At ANTIOCH.	Tiberius Alexander made procurator of Judea about this time.
47	At ANTIOCH.	
48	His "first missionary journey" from Antioch to Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe,	Agrippa II., Acts 25, made king of Chalcis.
49	and back through the same places to ANTIOCH.	Cumanus made procurator of Judea about this time.
50	St. Paul and Barnabas attend the "Council of Jerusalem."	Caractacus captured by the Romans in Britain. Cogidunus—father of Claudia, (?), 2 Tim. 4:21—assists the Romans in Britain.
51	His "second missionary journey" from Antioch to Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia,	
52	Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and CORINTH—Writes 1 Thess.	Claudius expels the Jews from Rome. Acts 18:2.
53	At CORINTH—Writes 2 Thess.	The tetrarchy of Trachonitis given to Agrippa II. Felix made procurator of Judea.
54	(Spring)—He leaves Corinth, and reaches (Summer)—Jerusalem at Pentecost, and thence goes to Antioch. (Autumn)—His "third missionary journey." He goes To EPHESUS.	Death of Claudius, and accession of NERO, Oct. 13.
55	At EPHESUS.	
56	At EPHESUS.	
57	(Spring)—He writes 1 Cor.	

A D	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	COTEMPORARY EVENTS.
57	(Summer)—Leaves Ephesus for Macedonia, (Autumn)—Where <i>he writes 2 Cor.</i> , and thence (Winter)—To CORINTH, where <i>he writes Galatians.</i>	
58	(Spring)— <i>He writes Romans</i> , and leaves Corinth, going by Philippi and Miletus (Summer)—To Jerusalem, at Pentecost; where he is arrested, and sent to Cæsarea.	
59	At CÆSAREA.	Nero murders Agrippina.
60	(Autumn)—Sent to Rome by Festus—about August. (Winter)—Shipwrecked at Malta.	Felix is recalled and succeeded by Festus.
61	(Spring)—He arrives at Rome.	Embassy from Jerusalem to Rome, to petition about the wall.
62	At ROME. (Spring)—Writes { <i>Philemon,</i> <i>Colossians,</i> <i>Ephesians.</i> (Autumn)—Writes <i>Philippians.</i> <i>Hebrews.</i>	Burrus dies. Albinus succeeds Festus as procurator. Nero marries Poppæa. Octavia executed. Pallas put to death.
63	(Spring)—He is acquitted, and goes to Macedonia, Phil. 2:24, and Asia Minor, Philem. 22.	Poppæa's daughter Claudia born.
64	(?) He goes to Spain.	Great fire at Rome, July 19, followed by persecution of Roman Christians.
65	(?) In Spain.	Gessius Florus made procurator of Judea. Conspiracy of Piso, and death of Seneca.
66	(Summer)—From Spain (?) to Asia Minor 1 Tim. 1.3.	The Jewish war begins.

A. D.	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	COTEMPORARY EVENTS.
67	(Summer)— <i>Writes 1 Tim.</i> from Macedonia. (Autumn)— <i>Writes Titus</i> from Ephesus. (Winter)—At Nicopolis.	
68	(Spring)—In prison at Rome. <i>Writes 2 Tim.</i> (Summer)—Executed—May or June.	Death of Nero in the middle of June.







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